

DEVALOKE

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Articles

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Shiksha - Rediscovering the Perennial Paradigm of Education | Shri Debasish Datta |
| Education in the Times of Post Covid | Dr. Hasit Joshipura |
| Art and Photography –A Reciprocal Synthesis in Respect of Education in the Pandemic Situation of COVID-19 | Dr. Amit Bhattacharya |
| E-Learning Practices Before and After Covid Situation: A Challenging Task to Teachers' Professionalism | Dr. Goutam Patra |
| Education in COVID -19 Times: Psychological Aftershocks | Prof. (Dr.) Taposh Ghoshal |
| A Glorious Synergy - Manipuri dance, Tagore and Uday Shankar | Smt. Bimbavati Devi |
| The Role of Online Teaching-Learning in Education in the Post COVID-19 Era | Smt. Rimpa Saha |
| Transformations in Medical Education during Post COVID Times | Dr. Surupa Basu |
| Women's Social Freedom | Ms. Jolly Sinha |
| Readers Forum | |
| Spiritual Evolution of the Self and Society: Indian Insights | Prof. (Dr.) Sanjoy Mukherjee |
| Role of Education During COVID and Post COVID Period | Prof. (Dr.) Abhijit Kumar Pal |

Book Review

- Leading Education Through COVID-19: Upholding the Right to Education - Fernando M. Reimers
 Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determination of Human Behaviour - David R. Hawkins

Article Digest

- Analyzing the Impact of COVID-19 on Education Professionals - Toward a Paradigm Shift: ICT and Neuro-education as a Binomial of Action
 A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning



Dev Sangha Institute of Professional Studies & Educational Research (DIPSER)

College of Education (For Women), Deoghar
 (NCTE Recognized | NAAC Accredited)

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The Eternal Divine Light



**Pujya Shrimad Acharya Saumyendra
Nath Brahmachary Ji**

(October 07, 1946 - June 23, 2012)

Dev Sangha Institute of Professional Studies and Educational Research (DIPSER) was established by Shrimad Acharya Saumyendra Nath Brahmachary Ji (1946 – 2012). A First Class First Mechanical Engineer and a Gold Medalist from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, he was awarded the prestigious B C Roy Gold Medal as the best all-rounder graduate of the Institute (batch of 1968).

Pujya Acharya Ji worked in the corporate world for ten years and rose to a senior position with the leading multinational of the day at a young age. Subsequently, inspired by his enlightened Master Shrimad Narendra Nath Brahmachary Ji, he gave up his brilliant management career to become a full-time spiritual aspirant, a brahmachari. He went on to spend five years in intense sadhana (meditation) and two years on pilgrimage across India. The biggest gain from this journey, he used to say, was a secular insight into the country. “It is only when you travel as a common man that you see the real country, come into intimate contact with its people.”

Pujya Acharya Ji continued to devote the rest of his life in the quest for eternal truth, combining it with creative institution building for spiritual and material upliftment of youth. In 1988, he was initiated as the Acharya (spiritual head) of Dev Sangha Ashram at Deoghar in Jharkhand. “Our ashram believes in resurrecting the Rishi culture of ancient India where there was no contradiction between—but rather a harmonious blending of—material well-being and spiritual upliftment,” he used to maintain.

Later, with the support of his friends and Ashram colleagues, Pujya Acharya Ji founded Dev Sangha Seva Pratisthan (DSSP) as the service wing of Dev Sangha to work primarily in the field of education and set up a (10+2) CBSE school, and a college of teachers’ education for women offering D.El.Ed., B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses along with research facilities. DSSP regards women’s education in the tribal state of Jharkhand as the most powerful tool for facilitating their economic empowerment and social upliftment. He, the teacher of teachers, was regarded as an extraordinarily gifted speaker bringing in, in simultaneously a most penetrating and entertaining manner, the quiet and brilliant wisdom of the Rishis of ancient India that informed the lives of king and subject alike, into everyday applications of modern life, organization, coordination and governance to help in identifying and resolving issues, while skilfully deconstructing the dichotomy between matter and spirit that had enervated the land over centuries to its great detriment. A highly respected and sought for guest lecturer, he was regularly invited to speak in premier institutes of the country like the IITs, IIMs, BITS Pilani, Universities, National Judicial Academy, Bhopal (NJA), Management Training Institute Ranchi (MTI SAIL), Indian Institute of Coal Management Ranchi (IICM), Administrative Training Institute Ranchi (ATI) and host of similar institutions both in India and in different countries of the World and spoke eloquently on varied facets of life - contemporary politics to decision-making, self-development, stress management, leadership, motivation and communication and of the joyful and pervasive nature of boundless wisdom.

He left for his eternal abode quietly on June 23, 2012. His golden light shall always guide us all in our journey of life.

FEW THOUGHTS

The world is going through one of the most difficult times in the history of mankind. The Covid 19 pandemic has caused irreparable damage to all facets of our lives including the education of millions of children who are striving to gain knowledge through alternative means, quite new to them as well as to the teachers.

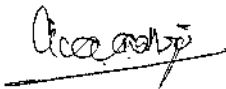
In such a grim situation, the biggest challenge before us is to develop capabilities so that quality education could be imparted to all students most effectively. The issues in such precarious situation are not only related to deliver superior quality of content to be delivered to students, but also to design processes that would be self-regulating and ensure seamless delivery of knowledge to children in today's grim scenario. This would require a sustained effort to develop adequate infrastructure to design, develop and disseminate knowledge in the most effective manner, and build required skill-set to deliver content to the target audience. Yet another dimension requiring immediate attention is to create robust systems and procedures that would ensure efficacy of design and delivery of knowledge to students. In such a grim situation where online activities become the mainstay, planning, organizing, coordination, monitoring and control

As we are witnessing, the second wave of Covid-19 has once again hit the education sector even more grievously. The situation is grim and once again, we have to tighten our belts to face the challenge with courage, tenacity and resolve; it is time that we must rededicate ourselves to the cause of education and strive to ensure that our students are able to learn without any interruption.

This calls for a concerted effort by one and all in the education fraternity. While a superior quality of education needs to be ensured, support material in the form of reading material, books and articles need to be provided to the students continuously. Students must also be made aware of the vast repertoire of knowledge made available in electronic form by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India and guide them to make best use of the same. It is also the time for the faculty members to enhance their knowledge base by doing need-based research, engage in publication and share their knowledge with others on a continuous basis.

Let us take a pledge to commit ourselves fully to help the students in their quest to learn. "Teaching children is an accomplishment; getting children excited about learning is an achievement".

Best Wishes



(Asim Kumar Chatterjee)

Secretary

Dev Sangha Seva Pratisthan &

Dev Sangha Institute of Professional Studies and Educational Research

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Articles		Page No.
Shiksha - Rediscovering the Perennial Paradigm of Education	Shri Debasish Datta	1
Education in the Times of Post Covid	Dr. Hasit Joshipura	10
E-Learning Practices Before and After Covid Situation: A Challenging Task to Teachers' Professionalism	Dr. Goutam Patra	12
Education in COVID -19 Times: Psychological Aftershocks	Prof. (Dr.) Taposh Ghoshal	19
Transformations in Medical Education during Post COVID Times	Dr. Surupa Basu	28
The Role of Online Teaching-Learning in Education in the Post COVID-19 Era	Smt. Rimpa Saha	34
Women's Social Freedom	Ms. Jolly Sinha	40
Art and Photography – A Reciprocal Synthesis in Respect of Education in the Pandemic Situation of COVID-19	Dr. Amit Bhattacharya	47
A Glorious Synergy - Manipuri Dance, Tagore and Uday Shankar	Smt. Bimbavati Devi	54
 Readers' Forum		
Role of Education During COVID and Post COVID Period	Prof. (Dr.) Abhijit Kumar Pal	60
Spiritual Evolution of the Self and Society: Indian Insights	Prof. (Dr.) Sanjoy Mukherjee	63
 Article Digest		
Analyzing the Impact of COVID-19 on Education Professionals - Toward a Paradigm Shift: ICT and Neuro-education as a Binomial of Action	Luis Espino - Diaz et.al	65
A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning	Sumitra Pokhrel and Roshan Chhetri	70
 Book Review		
Leading Education through COVID-19: Upholding the Right to Education	Prof. Fernando M Reimers	73
Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determination of Human Behaviour	Dr. David R. Hawkins	75

*“Aa maayantu bramhacharinah swaha
Bi maayantu bramhacharinah swaha
Pra maayantu bramhacharinah swaha
Da maayantu bramhacharinah swaha
Sha maayantu bramhacharinah swaha”*

- Taittiriya Upanishad 1/4/2

“Let pure seekers of wisdom arrive unto us for learning and wisdom from all directions. Let them arrive unto us by diverse paths. Let untainted seekers of knowledge reach unto us in proper form. Be they blessed with mastery over their senses. On them be conferred the strength of controlling their thoughts.”

FEATURE ARTICLE

Shiksha - Rediscovering the Perennial Paradigm of Education

Debasish Datta *

Abstract

An enlightened, happy society is built through right education based on truth that reveals, informs, explains, instructs, exemplifies through demonstration, behaviour and lifestyle – in the process inspiring the learner to follow and use such education in life.

In our reckoning such education is hard to come by today. The reason as well as result of this is that, irrespective of the branded prominence, money value, or burgeoning instrumentalisation of such education it stays comprehensively uninformed of and insensitive to the hunger of the soul for real and abiding truth. Gadgets multiply, as well as the trivialization of values and humanity. Poor in body and soul, society sickens and starves, high jumps to Moon or Mars notwithstanding.

Unless the bedrock of Truth or abiding Reality is rediscovered and broadcast as the basis of Education, this slide will not be stemmed, nor an ascent towards an enlightened society recommence.

To this end, the piece 'Shiksha' is aimed. It endeavours to set in motion an effort to rediscover the central paradigm for the desired Education, available with us since time immemorial in the form of Upanisadic wisdom of the Rishis of India whose enlightenment often recalibrated the pulse of society when gone astray.

In this country we are fortunate, many of us, to have had a nodding acquaintance with our own spiritual lore. Willy-nilly many of us have heard, or read a little bit or more, about the Upanishads, storehouses of fundamental wisdom that drives all life processes, material, vital, mental, intellectual and transcendental. Upanishads form the summum bonum of the Vedas, accepted and certified since the earliest times

as the compendium of comprehensive knowledge, wisdom and dynamics of consciousness and life processes covering the entire universe, its cosmology, content and gyrations revealed transcendently as aphorisms in the stage of elevated consciousness of seers of this ancient land, this blessed land which has remained continually the steady pole point of permanent, purposeful wisdom in the annals of human history notwithstanding the ills and convulsions that it had been beset with from time to time.

The Upanishads espouse and expound Brahavidya or the art and science of attaining the knowledge and realization of Brahman, the immanent and transcendent absolute and timeless repository that contains and reconciles all relatives within eternal and abiding Consciousness. It is this Brahavidya that Mundak Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, inter alia, characterizes in its opening aphorism, a supremely imperial and inclusive panegyric which we reproduce below with each word of its Sanskrit text in its transliterated English form in bold font followed by its meaning and purport in parenthesis :

“**Om** (Om) **Brahmaa** (The Comprehensive Creator Consciousness) **Devaanaang** (among all the various comprehensive (deified, deva) repositories of Consciousness forms) **prathamah** (the first) **sambabhava** (was manifest) **Vishwasya** (of the perceived world) **kartaa** (the originator) **bhuvanasya** (of the set of all domains) **goptaa** (the sustainer) **Sa** (He) **Brahmavidyaa** (quintessential, ultimate, timeless, comprehensive, all encompassing, immanent and transcendent, constitutive and conceptual, final and fundamental education/ learning/knowledge/wisdom) **sarvavidyaapratishthaam** (the foundation of all education/ learning/ knowledge/wisdom) **Atharvaaya** (to Atharvaa) **jyoshthaputraaya** (his eldest son) **praaha** (spoke).

Rendered in flowing form, it reads, “The Comprehensive Creator Consciousness, originator of the perceived world

* Noted Scholar, Physicist and Banker

and sustainer of the set of all domains was manifest as the first among all the various comprehensive (deified) repositories of Consciousness forms. He spoke to Atharvaa his eldest offspring of Brahavidya - the quintessential, ultimate, timeless, comprehensive, all encompassing, immanent and transcendent, constitutive and conceptual, first, foremost, final and fundamental education/learning/ knowledge/wisdom, which is the foundation of all education/learning/ knowledge/wisdom.”

Essentially, this insight asserts that Brahavidya is the foundation of all forms of Vidya. The English rendering of ‘Vidya’ is ‘education/ learning/ knowledge/ wisdom’. The word ‘Vidya’, especially in vernacular association, does have this diffuse connotation in our minds and is often applied in composite contexts with distributive attributions of differential weightage spread over the respective terms of the English rendering.

A clearer and more concrete concept of ‘vidya’ that emerges upon due deliberation would run like this, ‘the technique, known as education, of imparting and attaining specific, comprehensive knowledge through learning leading to applied wisdom’. This exposition of the term captures both the constitutive and purposive connotations of ‘vidya’. It can be readily seen that the substantive, actionable thrust of the description of ‘vidya’ offered above lies in the word ‘Education’, the method of imparting and attaining knowledge.

‘Education’ translates into “Shiksha” in Sanskrit. We thus move on from ‘vidya’ to ‘Shiksha’ as the operational manifestation of the process of sharing knowledge and wisdom with intent through transmission and reception leading to assimilation and application of knowledge and wisdom. The Upanishads, as the pristine, prescient, permanent caregiver to the world are never behind in pertinent exposition. Having introduced and expounded ‘vidya’ in the Mundak, they make it realisable and actionable by explaining and instructing on ‘Shiksha’ – Education – in the Taityreya Upanishad of Krishna Yajurveda, which commences with “Sheekshavallee” or ‘the Education branch’ as the first and the foundation of its three branches expediting Brahavidya.

Thus we observe that the importance of Shiksha or Education as the distinct and essential primary foundation for gaining knowledge is recognized and certified by no less an authority than the Upanishads. It is also a pointer to the necessity of having ‘Education’ as a basic discipline to

be taught in our halls of higher learning for its application commencing with the child educatee, and given due respect and attention to so that the best and most compassionate of minds and intellects are engaged in the process. Are we able to ensure this in our land? Hardly, one would say, inspite of the profusion of institutions teaching Education in the country, mostly trivialized through superficial surfeit and hollow content – a regrettable and mortifying state of affairs, to worsen until and unless a new and worthy paradigm is found and implemented with all sincerity, so help us God. In order to have a really resurgent India, we have to build new Indians and to do so we have to impart true and proper Education for them to imbibe and to apply and above all to integrate within themselves not merely information but illumination, not merely instruction but inspiration, not merely competition but compassion, not merely plenty but purity, not merely desire but devotion.

In order to achieve this we have to have appropriate Educators who themselves are trained repositories and practitioners of these attributes equipped to train trainees in the art and science of such training. This our blessed land is gasping for the requisite paradigm and its ready implementation across the country, any number of synthetic quick fix policies built for confused goals in a contraindicated social and educational environment and matrix notwithstanding.

Sheekshavallee of the Taityreya Upanishad makes the basics of this desired paradigm available to us succinctly. We may care to take notice. We would be well advised to listen to the direct words of the Upanishad and take instructions therefrom. The Sheekshavallee or Education branch of the Upanishad is divided into twelve anuvaks or sections, each containing one or more aphorisms.

Though fundamental, these are in many instances presented in form and idiom concomitant with established norms and mores of contemporary perception and practice, i.e. those of Vedic times and the pertinent socio-philosophical environment and beliefs. Besides, they presuppose familiarity with terms and concepts of life, nature, order and relation of elemental phases of consciousness manifest as the dynamic of the universe which formed the cornerstone of comprehensive organically connected and firmly founded, progressively illuminating education premised on the principle we discussed above while presenting the Mundak formulation of the foundation of all education or vidya as Brahavidya.

Contrarily, the precepts and practices of any branch of education including the subject of Education itself in current times are organized as what would have been termed by the seers of The Upanishads as a vacuous exercise ab initio since these are completely devoid of, rather abstemious of any mention of or connection with what such seers have called the foundation of all vidya or education and named it Brahmaidya. A rather abrasive and confrontational statement perhaps, nonetheless correct inasmuch as it reflects the basic inadequacy in the process of education adopted generally, devoid of true foundation as well as consistent, abiding, fulfilling, meaningful, sustainable, comprehensively beneficial purpose. The rare and exceptional cases where we yet come across consummate human resource products are not because of the scheme of Education followed with much fanfare as common procedure but inspite of it. This gross and fundamental inadequacy in the principles, purpose and practice of education lies at the bottom of the pointless and pernicious global sociopolitical dynamics that informs the senseless and desperate drive towards progressive self-annihilation and the associated hopelessness that severely damages the health of humanity by the day.

Before presenting the instructions on Education or Shiksha from the Taityreeya we would do well to remind ourselves that preceding even the primary and foundational instructions advised therein – which themselves are so different in emphasis, precedence and importance from contemporary custom, content and goals of modern education and its burgeoning techniques with ever changing experimental variations in form and style – both the trainer and the trainee, whether in any particular discipline or in the subject of Education per se, ought to be aware and knowledgeable of the subject of his or her self, the self who will teach and the self that will be taught. In order to promote effective transmission of proper knowledge in principle and application, the transmitter and receiver ought to be self-aware, aware of the self, constitutionally and environmentally, and this awareness has to be correct and authentic for the sake of true, proper and fruitful transmission, reception and perception, free from the trappings of imposed constructs and constricted predetermination based on merely provisionally expedient and often vacuous priorities promoted in the idiom of cutthroat conflict. Since all transmission essentially transmits the self of the teacher transmitter constituted of the innate frequency of his dynamic being on the vehicle of the subject taught, and is received and perceived by the receptor

learner through the frequency of his own dynamic being, the foremost requirement for truly beneficial and useful education is a degree of resonance between the educator and educatee, which in today's practice is evidenced rarely, by way of chance exception. The name of this dynamic being with its characteristic frequency of pulsation is also known as the manifest self of the being, hence the predominant necessity of awareness, true awareness and fundamental knowledge of the self that we have spoken of above.

In this context, if we hearken to Taityreeya again we shall hear the perennial invocation that heralds the Sheekshavallee. It runs thus:

**“Saha nau avatu, saha nau bhunaktu, saha veeryang
karavaavahayi**

**Tejaswi nau adheetamastu, maa vidwishaavahayi, maa
vidwishaavahayi”**,

and freely translates into -

“Let both of us be protected equally and together, let both of us partake of knowledge and wisdom equally and together, let both of us be endowed with prowess equally and together. Let what we study and learn be full of strength, power and the light of wisdom for us equally and together, let not strife, hatred and discontent visit us to divide and destroy, let not strife, hatred and discontent visit us to divide and destroy”

The entire process and exercise of Education, the transmission and reception of knowledge and wisdom starts with this earnest invocation by the teacher and taught together, and inveigles their combined and resonant effort throughout the process of education. We trust that the purport and importance of what we have discussed just before is adequately instanced by this inaugural invocation of the Taityreeya as the essential precursor to Education – hardly given any operational recognition, priority and exposition (although parroted as inconsequential ritual in many institutions in the country without explaining and following it in principle and practice as the bone marrow of the education process) as the single most important fundamental in the education process from the infant to the worldly-wise savant of today. Quo Vadis, Domini! Moving back to our main proposition of being aware of and knowing the self that we recommended as a preferred prerequisite of education, given or received, we bow to the divinely inspired and illumined beyond all bondage, the reincarnated ancient Rishis of recent times, Acharya Brahmaid Shrimat

Narendranath Brahmachari Ji of Dev Sangha, Deoghar, divine child of Brahmavidvarishtha Brahmashri SatyDev Ji, both of whom gifted to the current renegade civilization of the world the principles of ‘Satyapratishtha’ (The Foundation of Truth Reality) and ‘Sadhan Samar’ (The Battle of the Spirit) followed by ‘Satyer Path ba Amir Sandhan’ (The Way of Truth or The Search for Self) rediscovering for ill directed society and individual, in theory and practice, the summum bonum of wisdom and being, exalted as the message of the self-realised Rishis enshrined in the Upanishads.

There is no better directory to the self than ‘Satyer Path ba Amir Sandhan’ (The Way of Truth or The Search for Self) mentioned above, consecrated to the great good of humanity as the primer of all education, of whatever form and content. Its instruction is simple, precise, practicable and perfect, as we may see hereinafter. The skeptic might be thinking already that these citations are essentially esoteric, and unrelated to reality (as misperceived) or that such apparently elevated prescriptions attend to the ruminations of the ancient recluse and may be good for spiritual theorising rather than for practical advancement in a mischievous environment. We have to remind him of the exhortations of the great Swami Vivekananda who swore by the immediate and essential necessity of bringing home the Truth enshrined in the Upanishads (Vedanta) to all including the lay and illiterate public – the fisher busy with his net, the tiller at work behind his plough, the cobbler on his awl. He had harangued over the entire journey from Colombo through Calcutta to Almora on his way back from the conquest of the West, the land of the skeptic and ironbound materialist to bring the Truth of the self to the simple, the light of the Vedanta to the straight at heart, because the Truth was simple, Reality was straight – to not worry about their inability to understand and follow it, that they would understand, accept and follow it directly, thereby the fisher becoming a better and happier fisher, the tiller a better and happier tiller, the cobbler a better and happier cobbler. The greater worry ought to have been how to bring the Truth to the learned city dweller, for his understanding had veered from the straight path long ago, his practices had become crooked, complicated and barren, so that he was in need of more light, more effort. In his own words in his lecture in Madras speaking in the open to tens of thousands of eager listeners, rich and poor, highly educated as well as ignorant, he had pleaded and thundered:

“As I told you the other day the only commentary, the authoritative commentary of the Vedas, has been made once

and for ever by Him who inspired the Vedas, by Krishna in the Gita. There it is for everyone, for every occupation of life. These conceptions of the Vedānta must come, must remain not only in the forest, they must not only go into the cave, but they must come to work out in the Bar, and the Bench, in the Pulpit, the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and students that are studying. They call to every man, every woman, and child, whatever be their occupation, everywhere they must be; and what to fear! The ideals of the Upanishads! How can the fishermen and all these carry them out! The way has been shown. It is infinite; religion is infinite, none can go beyond; and whatever you do, that is very good for you. Even the least done brings marvellous results; therefore let everyone do what little he can. If the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks he is the spirit, he will be a great student. If the lawyer thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on”.

And again,

“Bring, all light into the world ; light, bring light ; let light come unto every one, let the task be not finished till everyone has reached the Lord. Bring light to the poor, and bring more light to the rich, for they require it more than the poor; bring light to the ignorant, and more light to the educated, for the vanities of this education of our time are tremendous!”

Now look back at what we have been saying just before.

Is the understanding and awareness of the true and real self difficult? No. Is it impractical or irrelevant or inessential? No, as will be shown in a moment. The great Acharya Narendranath Ji’s message that speaks of and makes known the Self, - our adverted prime prerequisite for any Education whether primary, secondary, higher secondary, undergraduate, post graduate, post-doctoral, refresher, material, mental, intellectual, spiritual, transcendental – resonates perfectly with Swamiji’s clarion call.

The Brahmavid Acharya’s message runs on through his seminal offering (The Way of Truth or The Search for Self) in direct confirmation of this thesis.

A word of caution: not to ever make the mistake of deeming the child or young learner to be devoid of the necessary attributes for comprehending what is reproduced below. The simpler and purer the heart the easier for it to apprehend all of simple Truth at one go, but the instructor has to understand and learn it first. A college of Education rears instructors,

hence the absolute and emergent necessity of instructing potential instructors in 'The Way of Truth'. Thus it runs :

“Before we start deliberating on whether God is one or two, two or many, formless or with form, deified Consciousness or beyond imagery, one has to know the self the 'I' who will so deliberate. If I do not know this self, this 'I, then who is it that will enquire about, strive for, this God, the Lord, and how? Thus the foremost need is to know this 'I', to find and recognise this unheeded I, this Self.

Embarking upon this quest for 'I' one finds that a single substance - 'Consciousness' is forever present and manifest. This very 'I', now regarded as confined within body and senses, the selfsame self alone is manifest before and around me as land, water, fire, air, tree, tendril, fruit, flower, as the entire set of my ponderables in this world. Fruit, flower, tree, tendril or this observable universe are not mere external entities – they are but the limbs and organs of this Conscious 'I' or self. See, there is no perversion or sufferance in the goldness of gold when different ornaments are made from it. People are aware of items like necklace and bangles as objects with separate identities with different individual names and forms but without any difference in their goldness. However, when we are unobservant of their sameness in gold we tend to deem the necklace and the bangle as intrinsically different identities while in reality such differences in names and forms do not or cannot change their substance from being gold only. In the same manner, this Consciousness this 'I' this self, though transcendent and immanent in every name and form, as if veiling himself spawns apparently separate and different names and forms in the corners of the mind deluding it to regard these diverse appearances as being intrinsically different. The existence of the necklace and the bangle is in the goldness of gold alone, minus gold they do not have any substance whatsoever – yet, pushing the gold aside, as if overwhelming it, necklace and bangle emerge as the abiding real in the eyes of men. Having fallen a prey to this necklace bangle confusion, man appears to lose sight of the intrinsic gold. As shadows formed out of the substance of light hide light itself, apparently external nature too, substantiated entirely out of this Conscient Soul or Self, the Supreme Divine Mother, or 'I', looks to cover up the Soul. Man, losing sight of this Soul the Conscient One, regards external names and forms as things that are real and abiding. Not even once do they stop to think that as the pot minus clay has nothing left of its potness, as minus gold nothing of the goldness of the gold bangle remains, even so bereft of

'I' this Self or Soul, of this Existence-Consciousness-Bliss personified Supreme Lord, there remains no real substance of this external world. It is not that the Supreme Lord, this Self or 'I' exists because the world exists. That there might have existed or ought to have existed a Lord Creator in order to have created the world is also a delusion absolutely to be shunned. There is only this real, ever present Supreme Lord, Consciousness, steady and abiding. He is in the form of the world, he is in the being and existence of the world, he alone is in the absence of the world too. Talking of existence, He alone is, apart from Him there is or can be no other.

This He alone is the Self, Soul or 'I' – all the same. When I am the small self, possessed of awareness of the self merely as this body and senses, when, having lost myself in names and forms, unsheltered I roam around the world bereft of solace and comfort, even then I am not away from his great and loving breast for one moment. Continuing to remain in his bosom, substantiated in his substance yet I look for him, I search for him. In whatever situation one happens to be, devoid of the substance of that inmost 'I' of mine there is no reality of this body, mind, life or ponderable world – there never was, there never can be. This is not merely a philosophical tenet, nor mere dry theory. It is the very real truth and fact. Just as the substance of the wave or bubble is nothing but water, as every one of its atoms or molecules however small or insignificant is water only, similarly, much trifling as I or you may appear to be, whatever there is entirely of me or mine is nothing but this Unitary Conscient or Power of Consciousness. The Self Conscient Consciousness remains unblemished and undistorted by the veil of appearances as names and forms.

Shiva becomes Jeeva - the magnificent one is rendered little by circumscribing himself within the confines of an unreal imaginary delusion. Seeker, inspire yourself, see, who is it whose generous bosom is bared to embrace you. See - feel - with whose substance you are substantiated. Behold - in whose eyes you mingle your own eyes to possess the power of sight, in whose ears your ears mingle to possess their faculty of hearing. Observe - who assumes the garb of objects for your sight, words for your audition. Enquire - who blossoms as the power of mentation of your mind, as that lust for enjoyment inside you. My dear, gaze inwards still more deeply once again: Who camouflages himself variously as your spouse, son, friend, well-wisher. Look, look! The selfsame self who is the enjoyer in you is present as the object of enjoyment outside, the beholder within is

verily the beholden without. Oh my friend, essentially there are no real distinctions like within and without - whatever you see and regard as external is just the reflected shadow of your inner self. The exterior is only the reflection of the self within. Different and apart from the substance within there is no real without. As the child regards his own reflection in the mirror as another child - as he is afraid of his own shadow and regards it as an intruding ghost - in similar fashion you get scared and tense deeming just the reflection or shadow of your inner self to be something real and outside yourself.

Youngsters, you will attain this boundless elan with the help of Sadhana. What you now regard as realisable with only the greatest of labours and care, will be fulfilled at the drop of an eyelid. The provenances for which you scream rending heaven and hell will follow and serve you as your most devoted handmaid. Do not think that I speak thus in a flight of emotion, this happens, will happen and is happening. Youngsters, this power abides in you as well.

This power is just your own inherent power - and that is why it is not necessary to embark upon any trumpeted expedition to earn it. It has no real or special connection with donning ochre or adorning oneself with staff and pot. There is no issue here of being hermit or householder, scientist or philosopher, learned or illiterate, Hindu or Christian, Vaishnav or Shakta. You can start on your mission of victory from wherever or in whatever condition you are placed or happen to be.

However petty and merely body-centric or sensual a being might be, in his entirety he is nothing but the power of consciousness. As a spark of fire can be nothing but fire, as the drop of water though a drop only is part of the huge ocean, the being, or whatever is perceived by the being, even when appearing to be petty and insignificant, from a speck of dust to this rambling earth, tiny droplet to limitless ocean, everything is but variation in the modes of Conscient Power or Consciousness. Whenever frolicsome Consciousness, as if tossing and chopping herself up voluntarily with her self-created, self-imposed space-time appears to limit herself to become perceivable by our small selves, then itself her self-limited manifestations, these various units of being - the world, land, water, sky, air emerge (in and constituted by consciousness only all along).

'I' or this Conscient Power is the great ocean, and the being constrained by his delusional limited self-perception together with his world a drop on the bosom of this Conscient

Power. Conscient Power assumes the title of individual being as soon as she constrains herself within space-time. How strange, the being though residing completely in the bosom of this Power, subordinated, engulfed and infused totally by it, thinks of itself as something with a separate, independent existence - this is the only reason for grief.

We beings split ourselves up in many ways in space and time. We ourselves manifest the one and the same Conscient power cum knowledge as seer, sight, seen, as knower, known, knowledge. The one stream of knowledge, of Consciousness, plays around as knower, known, knowledge. The knowledge that was a whole, the Conscient one, the 'I' who was one, self-differentiates to view himself in the variety of names and forms. As a mad man looks around in search of his limbs thinking that he has lost these even though they are very much present with him, the being also, though self-differentiated only, as if enthralled by a witch regards all observables as separate and distinct from himself. Gradually, forgetting his self-differentiatedness also, he creates within himself the impression of further distinctions of similarity and dissimilarity. He descends from Supremacy and paramountcy to his present limitedness of being. He can on no account believe any longer that this earth, this water, sky, air are just the streaming of his own self - of Consciousness - of Knowledge alone. Listen, whatever appears as land or water, tree or rock are nothing but Consciousness, nothing but the self-manifested limbs and projections of yourself. The perceived world of tree, rock, fruit, flower etc., the powers of sight, hearing, discrimination, all, all are but manifestations or blossoms of Consciousness alone.

Having lost awareness of this Consciousness, having fallen from this state of realised comprehension by fantasizing an inert unconscious within this Conscient and conceptualising chunks of variety in this whole of undivided Consciousness, the being runs helter and skelter through its different avatars in search of happiness. At how many doors in his lust for pleasure does he not carry his petition with begging bowl in hand and careworn sack on shoulder? Oh! How absurd, how unfortunate a life does it then get to be. Too terrible is this self-amnesia, too heart rending. He who was once the self-manifest one, the creator and composer of all variety, is rendered today a destitute street beggar hankering for a bowl of food, a moment of happiness! One wonders whether to call this play or sport, illusion or delusion.

Progressively in the grip of self-amnesia, losing your own station in Conscient Self, drowning the perception of your overlordship, your self-differentiated reality, you have descended to reach this confined notion of yourself as a mere creature of body and senses. No sooner than your unitary perception of the entire world inside and outside of you as your own self-differentiated yet self-subsumed identity gets obliterated you start perceiving around you the whole assorted ménage of people, animals, birds, worms, insects, everything stationary and dynamic as intrinsically separate entities of same, similar or different and disparate genera. They appear to you as inconscient or inert because you view them as disconnected from yourself, from your elan vital, from your conscient self. You, the self conscient, squeezing and confining yourself gradually inside body and senses have created a perceptual make believe realm of matter and inertia as an external world that includes your body and senses. You fail to recognise the apparent external world of fruit and flower, tree and tendril as a mutilated manifestation of your integral perception, your unalloyed cognition, your conscient self alone. Deludedly, oblivious of your self-knowledge, you start regarding distinct domains of diverse artificial cognitive certainties as being external to yourself and as inflictions by what you misperceive to be the exterior.”

That was revered Acharya Narendranath ji speaking. Directly, one can see how in Consciousness which is the other name for self, all selves unite. Once this perception is there, at least the verity of it has been rationally understood and accepted, and is processed through practice, is it not so much the more natural for the teacher and taught to truly resonate making the process of transmission and reception of education so much the easier and more natural and spontaneous, leading to both material well-being and spiritual enlightenment, neither of which is outside the organic domain of Consciousness regaling itself in joyous frolicsome manifestation - shorn of exclusion or conflict ?

This then is the automatic fulfilment of the initial invocation of the Sheekshavallee – “Saha nau avatu, saha nau bhunaktu,” that we have discussed earlier herein. Unfortunately, both teacher and taught today are either innocent of this basic, this prime requirement, or dismissive of the same. And thus, whither education? For what ? To what abiding purpose, apart from contributing one’s bit to the viciousness of an increasingly vicious environment ? And all these trappings and heraldry, this synthetic brotherhood and

unenlightened institutions, egged on by the amused mega plutocrat for regaling himself as at a cockfight !!

Be that as it may, we shall refer educators to the Sheekshavallee of Taittireeya Upanishad, citing the substance of its advised practices – so much the more facilitated for emulation if both tutor and taught are preinitiated in the theory and practice of the Self (simple, as recounted hereinabove, and eminently advisable).

Part of the Sheekshavallee is taken up with issues of correct diction and chanting of invocations the science of which is involved with the mechanism of inducing action in the subtle and causal domains of existence by initiating gross activities such as hymnal chanting in proper, prescribed form to produce resonant vibrations between the gross and subtle realms of the universe. The precepts and practice of these activities are no longer in the practical domain due to long disuse, except in very exclusive circles, and thus burdensome and to little purpose for the uninitiated, although fully potent and effective if put into enlightened practice, for which, as indicated, there is perhaps little stomach in today’s milieu.

The rest of the aphorisms of the Upanishad which endure for ready and feasible – also highly advisable – comprehension and contemporary emulation, especially by the educator, and for transmission to the educatee as fundamentals to be practised across disciplines are quoted and their English translations given in the Appendix for ready reference in order to make the process, purpose and result of education truly beneficial and meaningful. The originals of the select verses are laid out in bold print followed by their respective English translations.

Appendix to ‘Shiksha - Rediscovering the Perennial Paradigm of Education’

(Select aphorisms from Sheekshavallee of Taittireeya Upanishad as discussed in the titled piece are given below followed by free translations of the respective aphorisms in English conveying their fundamentals expressed in contemporary idiom which may be followed easily without requiring proficiency in Sanskrit etymology, grammar or strict Vedic context and allusions, and with bearing to the submissions offered in the title. The numbers in parenthesis at the end of each aphorism denote the numbers of the respective anuvak and aphorism respectively)

Saha nau yashah, saha nau brahmavarchasam (from 3/1)

May renown descend on both of us. May both of us be burnished in the effulgence of Brahman

Yashchhandasaam risabho visvarupah, chandobhyo, adhyamritat sambabhava, sa mendro medhaya sprinotu, amritasya deva dhaarano bhuyasam, sariram me vicharsanam, jihvaa me madhumattama, karnaabhyaam bhuri visruvam, brahmanah koso, asi medhayaa pihitah, srutam me gopaaya (4/1)

He who is the foremost leader and sustainer of all life rhythms and manifest as all that there is, the substance and essence of all knowledge and wisdom, may He the supreme Lord nourish and fulfill me with His illumined wisdom so that I may be enabled to be the repository of supreme knowledge, that I be endowed with apposite strength of body. May my tongue be sweet of utterance, may I be enabled to hear much auspicious tidings. You in your corporeal appearance form the brilliant sheath of Supreme Brahman, do sheath my knowledge of Self that I acquire through hearing of it

Aavahanti vitanvaanaa, kurvaanaa, acheeramaatmanah, vaasaamsi mama gaavascha, annapaane cha sarvadaa, tato me shriyamaavaha, lomasaam pashubhih saha svaahaa, aa maa yantu brahmachaarinah svaahaa, vi maayantu brahmachaarinah svaahaa, pra maayantu brahmachaarinah svaahaa, damaayantu brahmachaarinah svaahaa, samaayantu brahmachaarinah svaahaa (4/2)

With wholesome prayers beneficial for all we beseech that we receive forthwith from Shree the benefactress and provider for all wherewithal and provenance in plenty to feed, clothe, shelter my extensive self with much and shower us with bounties

With wholesome prayers beneficial for all do we beseech, may disciplined enquirers after all knowledge reach unto us from all directions, may they come to us in various forms, may they arrive before us in large numbers properly in excellent manner, may they remain by us to learn the care and control of the body and senses, may disciplined enquirers after all knowledge reach unto us to learn the management and governance of activities of the mind

Yasho janeasaani svaahaa, shreyaan vasyasoasaani svaahaa, tam tva bhaga pravisaani svaahaa, sa maa bhaga pravisa svaahaa, tasmin sahasrashaakhe ni bhagaham tvayi mrije svaahaa, yathaa aapah pravataa yanti, yathaa masaa aharjaram, evam maam

brahmachaarinah, dhataarayantu sarvatah svaahaa, prativeso'si pra maa bhaahi pra maa padyasva (4/3)

With wholesome prayers beneficial for all do we beseech that repute and fame attend us flowing from the congregation of aspirers seeking knowledge, that we be much adulated amongst the wealthy. O munificent repository of all plenty worthy of praise and worship, may we be allowed into your heart, may you inspire our hearts with your presence. May we wash away all our misperceptions and misdeeds in the flowing rivers of your grace. O Dispenser of all, as the masses of water rush down sloping land, as the months travel to immerse themselves to be absorbed in the year, even so let true seekers of knowledge and truth reach us from all sides. You are the rest and repose of all, reveal yourself to us, inveigle and fill us with yourself, make us full and replete with you.

Ritam cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, satyam cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, tapas cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, damashcha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, shamascha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, agnayashcha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, agnihotram cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, atithayashcha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, maanusham cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, prajaa cha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, prajanashcha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, prajaatishcha svaadhyaya pravachane cha, satyamti satyavachaa raatheetarah, tapa iti taponityah paurushishtih, svaadhyaya pravachane eveti naako maudgalyah, taddhi tapastaddhi tapah (9/1)

Know and practise true methods of application of knowledge, study and teach. Know and practise true and proper communication and deportment, study and teach. Know and practise true control and management of body and senses, study and teach. Know and practise true control and management of the internal faculties of mind, intellect, ego and memory, keep the household fires of sustenance, invocation and food preparation alive and burning, study and teach. Offer oblations to the fires, study and teach. Perform properly the worldly duties and rites, study and teach. Procreate per prescription, study and teach. Cohabit in ordained moderation, study and teach. Inspire continuation of progeny, study and teach. Seer Satyabrata scion of the Raheetaras says Truth is actionable. Seer Taponitya son of Purushishti says, committed incessant aspirational striving and effort is actionable. Seer Naaka son of Mudgala says

study and teaching alone is actionable, for that is the incessant striving, that is the relentless effort or Tapas

Aham vrikshasya rerivaa, kirtih prishtham gireriva, urdhvapavitro vaajineeva svamritam asmi, dravinam savarchasam, sumedhaa amritokshitah, iti trisankorvedaanuvachanam (10/1)

(Repeat and repeat to yourself) The self of mine is the inspirer soul, Lord courser of the inner realms propounding this perishable universe of mine. The tales of my deeds are lofty as the back of the mountain. The Self is the manifest Consciousness Brahman the origin and cause of all composites like this threefold corpus (body). Self the Existence is as the regnant nectar of bliss that dwells in the Sun of Consciousness. I the Self, am the wealth of effulgent Consciousness. My self of excellent intellect is immersed in the perennial bliss of existence – thus spoke the seer Trishanku upon gaining self realisation

Vedam anuchyaachaaryoantevasinaamanushaasti - satyam vada, dharmam chara, svaadhyaayaanmaa pramadah, acharyaaya priyam dhanam aahritya prajatanam maa vyavachchhetsee, satyaanna pramaditavyam, dharmanna pramaditavyam, kusalaanna pramaditavyam, bhutyayi na pramaditavyam, svaadhyaaya pravachanaabhyaam na pramaditavyam (11/1)

Having completed instructions the teacher elaborates to the taught, ‘Speak Truth, perform in propriety. Fail not in study. Proffer to the teacher his preferences, blessed by the teacher assume the position of householder and cause not severance in the line of progeny. Fail not to cleave to Truth. Fail not in Proper action. Fail not in self-protection. Fail not in auspicious actions for harnessing wealth. Fail not to study and teach

Devapitrikaaryaabhyaam na pramaditavyam, maatridevo bhava, pitridevo bhava, acharya devo bhava, atithidevo bhava, yaanyanavadyaani karmaani, taani sevitavyaani, no itaraani, yaanyasmaakam sucharitaani, taani tvayopaasyaani, no itaraani (11/2)

Fail not in due actions for extending proper services to the domain Lords of the realms of Consciousness and in the discharge of duties towards forefathers. Be as one to whom mother is God. Be as one to whom father is God. Be as one

to whom teacher is God. Be as one to whom the unbidden guest is God. Be as one to whom mother is God. Doable are deeds that are not decried, not others. Those acts of ours that are proclaimed as proper and permitted and prescribed acts are to be performed by you regularly

Ye ke chaasmachchhreyamso braahmanaah, tesaam tvayaasanena prashvasitavyam, shraddhayaa deyam, ashraaddhayaa adeyam, shriyaa deyam, hriyaa deyam, bhiiyaa deyam, samvidaa deyam, atha yadi te karmavichikitsaa vaa vrittavichikitsaa vaa syat (11/3)

Not others. The ones higher than you in knowledge and holiness are to be offered the best seats and steps taken to lighten the strain of their labours. Offerings are to be given with respect. Not to be given without respect. To be given within means. To be given with shy humility. To be given under concern lest ethical principles be violated. To be given in friendship. And, should you be confused about the propriety of performing any action prescribed by revelatory maxims or prescribed rules

Ye tatra braahmanaah sammarshinah, yuktaa aayuktaah, alukshaa dharmakamaah syuh, yathaa te tatra varteran, tathaa tatra vartethaah, athaabhyaakhyaateshu ye tatra braahmanaah sammarshinah, yuktaa aayuktaah, alukshaa dharmakamaah syuh, yathaa te teshu varteran, tathaa teshu vartethah, esha adeshah, esha upadeshah, eshaa vedopanishat, etadanushaasanam, evamupaasitavyam, evamu chaitadupaasyam (11/4)

then follow in deed the actions of wise and judicious, discriminating persons of that time and place who happen to be dutiful as per standard and regular prescribed rules, engage themselves spontaneously in proper action and habits, are neither harsh nor cruel in behavior, and are free of lust and greed. And if any such person is doubted or accused of anything, then follow in deed the actions in such respect of other wise and judicious persons of that time and place who happen to be dutiful as per standard and regular prescribed rules, engage themselves spontaneously in proper action and habits, are neither harsh nor cruel in behavior, and are free of lust and greed. This is the secret of the Vedas and Upanishads. This is the instruction and the rule. This is how you should perform all deeds. This is how all acts are to be performed.

FEATURE ARTICLE**Education in the Times of Post Covid****Dr. Hasit Joshipura ***

In the last three decades, two developments have had an enormous impact on our lives, be it the way we learn, interact, work or engage with each other. This period has been completely disruptive. The two developments have been the creation of the Internet and rapid evolution of communication technologies. The power of both these is evidenced by the fact that it has seen two booms, created unprecedented wealth for individuals and economic growth unmatched since the War. In 2017 five stocks, FAANG, Facebook, Apple, Alphabet Netflix Google together accounted for the growth of the entire Dow in 2017. All these businesses were created in the last two decades and based on the two innovation and communication technologies. The Dow has large corporations that are over a century old.

These two technologies have been far reaching and have had a great impact on knowledge creation and knowledge dissemination as well. Increasing internet penetration, development of the world wide web coupled with refinements in communication technology and fall in prices of mobile handsets have made access to the Net almost universal with steadily increasing usage of data even in countries which are developing like countries in Africa.

The most significant impact has been the way in which we engage with each other and communicate with each other and with the world around us, spawning a number of devices and applications. Starting with the now mundane email to, social media to mobile devices etc resulting in a twenty-four by seven engagement.

The quickest dissemination of these technologies happened in the data transmission space followed by voice. And handset devices followed. Search, social engagement, short messaging etc. applications followed and today are firmly

embedded making a world without them unthinkable.

The emergence of the Industrial Revolution in the UK signalled the shift from the importance of Trades and Skills to formal education. Prior to that education like everything else was under the control of theology and some of the oldest and greatest centres of learning in medieval Europe were under the Church.

Post Industrial Revolution, education came into its own with the emergence of great universities of Europe and Britain. And the value of knowledge started escalating. Up until then military might was what determined supremacy of nations along with economic prosperity

It was becoming clear that knowledge was the means to achieve both economic and military might. The US has some of the greatest centres of learning and not surprising that its pre-eminence has sustained.

Since the mid-90s, internet and communication technologies have resulted in innovation every sphere of activity, healthcare, education, shopping etc. The mantra has moved to knowledge resulting in innovation. With the result that a number of models are getting disrupted in every sphere of activity. And education is no exception.

One of the challenges of education is it has become elitist. Early signs of democratisation of education were already evident with the emergence of online education. It started with MOOCs Massive Open Online Courses. At that stage, since knowledge creation was moving rapidly, a need was felt to use these for continuing education. Because major universities were reluctant to dilute their brand equity. But all that changed with emergence of COVID. It was the great equaliser. Everybody per force had to move online. It is as if Destiny decided to fast forward the digital

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transformation which was imminent. And it had definite implications for the future of education too.

So, what implications does it hold for the future of education?

Firstly, lot of strides have been made by public universities in India and overseas in setting up systems where a deserving student is not deprived because he or she cannot afford. Costs associated with online programs are definitely lower and therefore for the same level of disbursement the University will be able to accommodate more needy students. While experiments are on around the world on what is the right balance of physical and digital, efforts are being made to synchronize the balancing process.

Eventually the right models will perceptibly emerge after experience because socialisation is as much learning as is pedagogy.

But the biggest potential of digitisation of education is for the developing world. Large swathes of population are not literate. With cheap data, low-cost devices which are on the way, the opportunity is huge to educate both current students and the elderly who can play catchup.

Quality of education can improve as well since the number of students per teacher can increase.

A clear Plan can be developed by the education Ministry and costs can be managed because physical infrastructure can be shared. Therefore, cost per student comes down drastically. Of course, as mentioned earlier, it is a mix of physical and digital.

Similarly programmes like medicine or Law which are practice based, will necessary continue as is.

I believe we have an epochal opportunity to educate our masses. We should not lose this.

FEATURE ARTICLE

E-Learning Practices Before and After Covid Situation: A Challenging Task to Teachers' Professionalism

Dr. Goutam Patra *

Abstract:

The whole world is passing by an unprecedented Covid situation. Face to face mode of teaching- learning process becomes a dream today. Moreover, in the 21st century, dissemination of knowledge is necessary to the world community learners using modern technology in on line mode of learning. As a matter of fact, web based learning increases in a direct proportion with the increase of the number of students. This has made educators exert a lot of effort to help the learners to get interactive content that is full of multimedia as it has been proven that it has a significant effect on the process of learning. The impact of blogs and wikis has also been investigated on learners' collaboration and reflection and it was reported that they both have a positive effect. E-learning has been introduced as a tool in the learning process in the majority of the international universities worldwide. The term "e-learning" is defined by as "any learning that involves using internet or intranet."

According to "e" in e-learning should not stand for electronic; it should be an abbreviation for "evolving, enhanced, everywhere, every time and everybody." In fact, it shows most of the advantages of e-learning for learners and instructors. Although the e-learning term and tools do exist for over a decade, the educational research field has not given enough attention to the study of student motivation under the effect of e-learning. E-learning has grown in significance as an educational tool just like technology has developed and progressed over the years. Interestingly, there have been more efforts at advancing technology than on attempting to understand the needs and learning styles of individual learners and instructional design. The 21st century has seen rapid progress with such things as the

Internet and online learning. The purpose of this paper is to provide practical suggestions for those who are planning to develop online courses so that they can make informed decisions in the implementation process. Based on the findings, the author argued that effective online instruction is dependent upon 1) Efficient, skilled teacher community abled to handle the new technologies. 2) well-designed course content, motivated interaction between the instructor and learners, well-prepared and fully-supported instructors; 3) creation of a sense of online learning community; and 4) rapid advancement of technology.

It is hoped that this will stimulate an on-going discussion of effective strategies that can enhance professionalism and faculty success in transitioning to teach online.

Key Words: e-Learning, e-education, Microphone, Expertization, Professionalism, Microsoft, emojis

Introduction:

This age is an era of knowledge explosion and age of e-learning. E-Learning, as a much used of-late as a mode of education, consists of teaching-learning in or out of the classrooms using computers and the Internet. As a web-based learning mode, it is executed online through different electronic media such as the internet, audio, video etc. for sharing knowledge with the help of e-books, CDs, webinars and other medium of instruction. In the past one year it has revolutionized the conventional method of chalk and board style of learning imparted earlier to the students. E-Learning education adopts a 'give and take' mechanism for delivering and receiving simpler, prolific, and productive education.

Online-learning, applied extensively after the Covid-19 lockdown stresses application by purely adopting the

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latest technology, delivered specifically through the internet everywhere other than the traditional classroom based teaching. However, the most challenging task for the present day educators is to use the new technology to initiate web based teaching –learning practices and enable learners to imbibe knowledge in a most effective manner. Continuous professional development (CPD) is a crucial need for teacher’s professionalism with teachers’ self-efficacy and successful transfer of learning becomes a superordinate goal for teachers with professional development has a positive impact on their work. The National Education Policy-2021 emphasizes the need for continuous professional development of educators and provides opportunities that meet teachers’ needs, critical for making CPD accessible and purposeful for them. It is imperative that an effective education system could be built on continuous professional development - active learning, holistic and collaborative approaches, that enhances the overall quality of professional expertise of the teaching workforce particularly in this age of e-learning.

There is thus a need for constantly honing the existing skills of teachers, developing new learning experience and ensuring that students are able to gain a fruitful learning experience through online teaching. Here are just a handful of the skills which online teachers are refining or developing every single day.

A composite skill set essential for continuous professional development of educators can be described as below.

1. Communication Skills

In an online setting, a teacher’s communication is through the online medium wherein there is no direct interface between the teacher and the taught. Such a medium provides no direct eye-to-eye contact and non-verbal communication, so essential in a direct classroom teaching is missed both by the teacher as well as by the students as well. When we are confident in this medium, we automatically adapt to the lack of visual cues that can trip up a less skilled communicator. We control language, tone, and style to make sure our learners hear us loud and clear – the first time we email them or post an online course announcement. Online teachers simply don’t have time to clarify things numerous times. So we have to quickly train ourselves to being clear and targeted communicators.

2. Skill of Compassion and Empathy

Online students can often find it difficult to face their learning obstacles in a virtual environment. We may find that our students fail surprisingly sharing personal and confidential information. The teachers should be empathic listeners when a student confides in us about a significant Life Event that says they trust us. And this is where our ability to be compassionate comes into play. When a student misses a deadline not because they’re disorganized, but because of their lack of scope to share own views as it is not face to face mode of teaching. So teachers have to be more passionate to be empathic listening and compassionate to the learners’ needs.

3. Skill of Patience

Online teachers should be More Patient. This is a tough job as in the online teaching answers are not instant given or Problems are not always solved immediately. There is possibility of lapses to effective communication and effective learning due to lack of patient on the part of teachers and students as well. So both online students and online teachers are learning to be more patient as part of this process. Sometimes our online students are so anxious or so overwhelmed, that they genuinely cannot grasp what seems to us like a perfectly simple task. A patient explanation or pertinent example can help them make the breakthrough they need.

4. Skill of Subject Expertization

Teachers need a variety of professional development skills along with knowledge of their subject matter and experience in order to be an effective teacher.

When we teach a topic, our expertise in the area automatically increases – even if we already had a good grasp of the subject to start with. We teach in several areas (from Adult Education to Communication and Project Management) and we are learning something new all the time particularly using of technologies. Sometimes it is from reading or talking to colleagues – but more immediately it’s from grading student work, and interacting with the very pupil we are teaching. So, yes, we are a subject expert in a few areas. But a good

proportion of our knowledge has stemmed from what our students have to teach us.

5. Time Management

Time management is an essential skill for online teachers. Time management is self-management and the way a teacher is able to manage his time while taking a session with the students, defines the depth of his knowledge, his empathy towards the students and also about the resources he is using to deliver knowledge. Such educators are also able to take on bigger challenges as they are always handling time pressure and know how to prioritize and get through the most important items in time.

Teaching online requires different types of interactions with students within a span of time. So teachers need to have the skills to manage the time properly.

6. Skills of Using Technology:

The teachers taking on line classes should be proficient in computers and know the basics of MS Office or similar other software. They must have the skills to create a Microsoft Word Doc and save it as a PDF, create a PowerPoint slide deck, know how to make and save JPG or PNG image files and also upload and convert an .mp3 audio file into another type with this website Media

7. Skills of Creating & Sharing Audio Files

Teachers must have a good knowledge of creating audio files which they might use during on line sessions. There are a number of ways the teachers can create audio files and endless apps. They can create an audio file on our computer. (If they are on a PC, they might search the programs menu for Sound Recorder.) The next step is to upload that audio file to Google Drive or Drop Box or share that audio file with students.

Teachers can also create an audio file on our smart phone and get that audio into the Google Drive or Drop Box or email. The same can then be shared with students depending on how we have our folders and the viewing permissions set up, our student may or may not already be able to see the file that we uploaded at this point.

8. Skill of Looking at Professional on Camera:

Our professionalism is either enhanced or limited by how students see us. We have to up our background and adjust the height of our webcam so that we look professional.

Lots of laptops today have built-in webcams. Sometimes our computer gets confused and displays Zombie Cam instead of Friendly Cam. When we have multiple cameras like this, we also should practice switching between the different camera options in Skype or Zoom.

9. Skill of activating the Right Microphone:

First we have to become sure that the computer probably already has a built-in microphone. If we are planning on making our living from communicating online, our voice needs to sound crisp and clear — not tinny or buzz. It is especially unwise to charge for pronunciation lessons if we have a low-quality microphone that distorts our voice.

Here is a mode to practice with our microphone:

- We have to adjust our microphone and headphone settings. If we are using a video conferencing platform like Zoom or Skype, we just need to explore the settings for audio devices. There is a dropdown menu that shows us the different microphone(s) that could be used.
- This is new to everyone, so we may be prepared to troubleshoot and let our students know we are working on it. Take an hour to familiarize ourselves with the technology. Most companies are offering additional training right now.
- We should be very clear to students about where they should go for technical support (good digital technologies will have support services).

10. Skill of being expert on the unexpected technological failure:

At some point technology might fail, whether it is a video chat not connecting or assignment and/or resource links not working properly. A backup plan for all assignments and assessments could be preserved for any last minute failure.

In case of any technology failure, the teacher should be transparent in his/ her communication to students. For example, put a policy in place that outlines the actions students should take if they are unable to submit assignments due to technical issues. Teachers should also not be afraid to solve technical challenges in real time, such as during synchronous discussions or collaborative real-time activities, to save time.

11. Skill of maintaining a strong presence

We need to send a message to all students, by video if possible, to welcome them to online learning and reassure them. Video chat rather than basic instant message is also required when interacting with students. It is equally important to get the students talking by beginning discussions in the discussion board, and then contributing rapid, regular, and open responses to questions using non-verbal communication such as emojis with professional and personal traits.

12. Skill of setting clear objectives of the course

While teaching, objectives of on line lesson should be clear to the teachers. Online learning is new to the students as well. It should be clear to students how their achievement will be evaluated in the course will be determined now (participation often makes up a much larger portion of the grade than in face to face classes).

It is needed to set expectations for response time. For example, make it clear that we will respond to emails within one business day, otherwise students may expect us to answer an email within a few hours.

13. Skill of establishing a sense of comfort and develop a community of learners

Teachers should be skilled in demonstrating enthusiasm and excitement about teaching the course to alleviate fear, anxiety, and isolation. They should make themselves humanized by posting a welcome video, a biography, photos that tell stories about what they are doing to keep busy during social isolation linking to news articles or video clips to encourage each student to personalize their homepage and spend time going around the class asking students to share information about what they have posted.

Teachers should be skilled in Incorporating instant messaging, web cameras, blogs etc. asking questions that empower participants to question each other, and elicit rich discussion. Teachers should also be able to respond to the community as a whole rather than directing all responses to individual participants outside of the community.

Teachers should be able to promote reflection and communication through quality asynchronous discussion posting topics that have not been fully discussed and promote contribution and reflection to monitor participation and contact students individually if they are either not participating, or are taking over conversations and not permitting contributions from other individuals.

14. Skill of having a good balance of active leader and active observer:

The teacher should be able to check In with the Students and see how things are going. He/ she can do formal or informal surveys to assess attitudes, workload and challenges. Use Ad Hoc Quizzes to assess learner comprehension of material and check content resources and applications shall be necessary.

Teachers should regularly check all links, resources, modules, and activities. Online content can move or change, which can lead to disengagement.

It is important to assist students who are having difficulty navigating course links or managing the material spanning across various web pages.

Make the process of navigating to websites that are not embedded in the course, and demonstrate how to appropriately manage keeping track of navigation when jumping from site to site.

Integrate into our day-to-day lives, they affect the way students learn and teachers teach, as rapid developments in technology. Modern teachers need to be competent in not only basic skills but new skill sets.

15. Qualities of Present day Teachers:

Here are some 21st century's professional development skills, or as we like to call them, "modern skills," that today's teachers should possess.

i. Adaptability

In this modern, digital age, teachers need to be flexible and able to adapt to whatever is thrown their way. Likewise, administrators are changing and updating expectations and learning standards. Whether it's to the way students learn, the behavior their classroom exhibits, or their lesson plans, being able to adapt is a skill that every modern teacher must have.

ii. Confidence

Every teacher needs to have confidence, not only in themselves but in their students and their colleagues as well. A confident person inspires others to be confident, and a teacher's confidence can help influence others to be a better person.

iii. Ability of Communication

Being able to communicate with not only your students but with parents and staff is an essential skill. Think about it: almost all of a teacher's day is spent communicating with students and colleagues, so it is crucial to be able to talk clearly and concisely in order to get our point across.

iv. Being a Team Player

Part of being a teacher is being able to work together as part of a team or a group. When we work together as a team, it provides students with a better chance to learn and have fun. Networking with other teachers (even virtually) and solving problems together will only lead to success. Doing so fosters a sense of community, not only in our own classroom but school-wide as well.

v. Continuous Learner

Teaching is a lifelong learning process. The world is always changing, along with the curriculum and educational technology, so it's up to you, the teacher, to keep up with it. A teacher who is always willing to go that extra mile to learn will always be an effective, successful teacher.

vi. Imaginative

The most effective tool a teacher can use is their imagination. Teachers need to be creative and think of unique ways to keep their students engaged

in learning, especially now that many states have implemented the Common Core Learning Standards into their curriculum. Many teachers are of the opinion that these standards are taking all of the creativity and fun out of learning, so teachers are finding imaginative ways to make learning fun again.

vii. Leadership

An effective teacher is a mentor and knows how to guide their students in the right direction. They lead by example and are a good role model. They encourage students and lead them to a place of success.

viii. Organization

Modern teachers have the ability to organize and prepare for the unknown. They are always ready for anything that is thrown their way. Studies show that organized teachers foster more effective learning environments. So it is even more imperative to be organized if you want higher-achieving students.

ix. Innovative

A modern teacher is willing to try new things, from new educational apps to teaching skills and electronic devices. Being innovative means not only trying new things, but questioning your students, making real-world connections, and cultivating a creative mindset. It's getting your students to take risks and learn to collaborate with others.

x. Commitment

While being committed to our job is a traditional teaching skill, it is also a modern one. A modern teacher needs to always be engaged in their profession. The students need to see that their teacher is present and dedicated to being there for them.

xi. Ability to Manage Online Reputation

This 21st century, modern teaching skill is definitely a new one. In this digital age, most, if not all, teachers are online, which means they have an "online reputation." Modern teachers need to know how to manage their online reputation and which

social networks are okay for them to use. LinkedIn is a professional social network to connect with colleagues, but other social networking site profiles, such as Instagram or Facebook, should remain private and separate from students.

xii. Ability to Engage

Modern teachers know how to find engaging resources. Nowadays, it is essential to find materials and resources for students that will keep them interested. This means keeping up-to-date on new learning technologies and apps, and browsing the web and connecting to fellow teachers. Anyway that we can engage students and keep things interesting is a must.

xiii. Understanding of Technology

Technology is growing at a rapid pace. In the past five years alone we have seen huge advancements, and we will continue to see them grow. While these developments may be hard to keep up with, it is something that all modern teachers need to do. Not only do we need to understand the latest in technology, but we must also know which digital tools are right for our students. It's a process that may take time but will be greatly influential in the success of our students.

xiv. Know When to Unplug

Modern teachers know when it's time to unplug from social media and just relax. They also understand that the teacher burnout rate is high, so it's even more critical for them to take the time to slow down and care for themselves. They also know when it's time to tell their students to unplug and slow down. They give their students time each day for a brain break and let them unwind.

xv. Ability to Empower

Teachers inspire; that's just one of the qualities that come along with the title. Modern educators have the ability to empower students to be critical thinkers, innovative, creative, adaptable, passionate, and flexible. They empower them to solve problems, self-direct, self-analyse and self-decipher in a rational way.

Conclusion:

With regard to the effectiveness of online learning, evidence indicates that online learning can be as effective as or more effective than traditional instruction, and blended approaches may be superior to others if professionalism is developed and infrastructures based on modern technology is up to the mark. However, research work suggests, questions remain about the types of student skills and attributes (e.g., meta-cognitive skills, organizational ability, motivation) that may influence or predict student success in online formats (Cavanaugh 2007). This is particularly important in the public schooling context, where universal designs and access affordances must be used to offer quality online learning opportunities to the full range of students served by the system. More research is required to understand when, how and under what conditions online learning can produce the greatest productivity gains for all students. Online programs that assume students have home access to a computer, the Internet and a printer are essentially reallocating some costs to students and their parents. Doing so, in turn, raises concerns about equitable access to online learning that districts must carefully address. There is emerging evidence that prevalent online learning models do not meet the needs of all students (Barbour & Reeves 2009; Keeler et al. 2007; Rice 2006). For example, students may need Internet access, technical aptitude, independent learning skills or adult supervision to engage fully in learning online. At the same time, there is emerging interest in the use of online learning for credit recovery and to meet the needs of students at risk of dropping out of school (Davis 2011; Sturgis et al. 2010; Watson and Gemin 2008). Many programs that address these populations of learners are popping up across the country. But questions remain unsolved regarding which implementation characteristics are associated with success for autistic students and students with disabilities and the degree to which access to technology and learning content present barriers for student participation and success in online learning programs.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Education in COVID -19 Times: Psychological Aftershocks

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Abstract

Covid-19 has had a serious effect on the socio-economic fabric of our society. The education, like other sectors, has also been affected seriously. While immediate corrective measures were taken by authorities to ensure that studies of millions of students are not impaired and the student community of all grades was reached out through the electronic medium, it has had severe side-effects needing deeper analysis and review.

One of the perilous fallout of the new medium of instruction has been the psychological distress caused by lockdown and online education. Continuous closure of academic institutions and delivery of education through computing devices, though substituted transfer of learning to some extent, it could not be a substitute for classroom learning. Moreover, absence of social interaction in schools and colleges, over a period of time, boredom due to confinement in homes, financial crisis, changes in lifestyle, disturbed sleep, family problems in many instances, have led to psychological problem amongst the students.

The paper seeks to explore the impact of the pandemic on the education sector in general and students in specific and suggests ways and means to cope up with the issues emerging during the pandemic. The paper also explores if a newer framework could be configured to address the new challenges in the 'New Normal Times'.

Introduction

Year 2020 has been one of the most cataclysmic years in the history of mankind; for it was for the first time in this century that the world came face to face with a health crisis that has affected every human being on this planet in some

way or another. COVID-19 which is said to have emerged from Wuhan (China) has caused an impact on humanity that has rare parlance in the annals of history. Since the first death from COVID-19 was reported a little over a year ago and formalized technical preventive guidelines were issued by WHO, there have been almost 2 million deaths due to COVID-19 virus, while several millions are still under treatment for this dreadful disease. Today, with the second wave striking nations, the disruptions are assuming distressing magnitude in all facets of human life.

The effect of this pandemic has been disturbing; over half of the world's 3.3 billion global work force are at risk of losing their livelihoods, tens of millions of people being at the brink of falling into life-threatening poverty, and the number of undernourished people, presently projected at nearly 690 million, could rise by up to 132 million by the end of the year. Millions of business enterprises face the threat of closure; the workers in the unorganized sectors of the economy are unemployed and many more are exposed to infection because of lack of awareness, social protection and access to quality health care schemes. Without the means to earn an income during lockdowns, many are unable to feed themselves and their families. For most, no income means no food, or, at best, less food and less nutritious food.

As the world strives to contain Covid 19, the dreadful pandemic has accentuated the harsh reality on the vulnerabilities and challenges that humanity faces today. The grim fight to save human lives has laid bare serious challenges causing severe economic and social disruption.

Pandemic and the Education Sector

Like all other sectors, the impact of Covid on the education sector has also been severe worldwide. Since the pandemic started, thirteen countries shut schools nationwide,

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impacting 290.5 million children and youth who would normally attend pre-primary to upper-secondary classes. A further nine countries implemented localized school closures to prevent or contain COVID-19. Should these countries also order nationwide school closures, it would prevent an additional 180 million children and youth from attending school. In India also, the pandemic has affected the future of over forty million students studying in over 1.5 million schools, 40,000 colleges and over 900 universities of the country.

The government response to ensure continuity of education in the wake of the Covid pandemic has quick, specific and effective and has helped much in continuing education of the students confined in their homes due to lockdown. Perhaps the only option available at this point in time was to connect to the students through online medium and to a great extent and this has enabled students to continue education uninterrupted. However, the efficacy of this initiative and its side-effects raises serious concerns having long-term consequences and necessitates a deeper inquiry and immediate remedial responses.

Studies have shown that education through the electronic mode during the lockdown has had several economic, social and behavioural consequences causing serious psychological effects on the students. It is also witnessed that this impact of pandemic was found to be as much on the smaller children as much as it for students enrolled for higher studies. Some of the imperatives having serious psychological effects on students could be enumerated as below.

Closure of educational institutions and the consequent self-quarantine has had a severe effect on all segments of society including the student community. Endless confinement in their homes to prevent the spread of the virus and the accompanying monotony seems to have disrupted the lives of the students portentously.

Major difficulties arising from the adoption of digital learning solutions whose design might not always be driven by best pedagogical practices has had intriguing complications affecting the students' psyche. The effect of disconnect caused by continuous absence of direct interactive learning and social interface has had varying degree of impact on students. Nonfulfillment of psychosomatic needs of students has led to a void that many students are finding difficult to overcome. The loneliness thus created has often led to a strange disinterestedness amongst the students

towards learning through online teaching has thus failed to address the behavioural transactions that takes place in offline teaching.

Not being able to go to school or college or use the library and adapting to the new norm of learning through the electronic medium and consequent absence of social interactions inside and outside classrooms has had serious implications on the physical and mental health of students resulting in frustration, stress, and depression and other emotional complications. It is also observed that absence of face to face communication and interface in the classrooms, lack of access to reference study material and direct contact with teachers has affected the quality of learning and has had a distressing outcome on the students at large.

Impact of Pandemic on Students: Some Studies

A research published in The Lancet Psychiatry (December 2020) on 'COVID-19 and adolescent mental health in India' states that COVID-19 might not be as harmful in children and adolescents as it is in adults, but it did cause several psychological distress in all age groups who are facing acute chronic stress because of parental anxiety, disruption of daily routines, increased family violence and home confinement with little or no access to peers, teachers, or physical activity. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director-General, WHO observed that the impact of pandemic on people's psychological health is already highly concerning. Social isolation, fear of contagion, and loss of family members is compounded by the anguish caused by loss of income and often employment.

In order to explore the impact of this pandemic on the lives of students, a survey of a total of 1182 individuals of different age groups was conducted from various educational institutes in Delhi - National Capital Region (NCR), India. The study identified certain factors like time spent on online classes and self-study, medium used for learning, sleeping habits, daily fitness routine, and the subsequent effects on weight, social life, and mental health. The research found that in order to deal with stress and anxiety, respondents adopted different coping mechanisms and also sought help from their near ones. The study also found that student's tried to engage themselves on social media platforms to overcome boredom during this period.

A prime cause is also said to be the level of interest evoked by on-line classes. In a study to ascertain the satisfaction level among students from online classes, it was indicated that 38.3% of students gave unsatisfactory response towards online classes (2.6% poor and 35.7% very poor), 33.4% considered it average while 28.4% (19.9% good and 8.5% excellent) gave a positive review. Interestingly, the analysis revealed that satisfaction levels varied considerably with different age groups of students. There were 51.6% (48.6% very poor and 3% poor) negative online class reviews from subjects in the '18–22' age group, compared to 31.5% (29.1% very poor and 2.4% poor) negative reviews from subjects in the '7–17' age group who spent more time on online classes.

Students were also asked about the medium of their online learning, 57.3% in the age group '7–17' used smartphones while the majority of students from age group '18–22' (56.4%) and age group '23–59' (57.8%) used laptop/desktop for study. However, only a small portion of the total students (3.1%) used tablet. With regard to the time spent in online classes, there was a statistically significant difference between the various mediums used. It was also discovered that the average time spent on online classes using tablets, 3.43 hours per day when using laptop/desktop, and 3.06 hours per day when using smartphones.

Factors Affecting Learning

The impact of this sudden change has been quite upsetting for learners. Researches have proved that the most commonly underlined stress factors were mainly financial limitations, remote online classes, lack of ability to have access to technological infrastructure like Smartphones and laptops, internet connectivity etc. and educational financial commitments.

The adverse impact of pandemic on students can be attributed to several socio-economic and behavioural factors. These factors could be explained as below:

1. Economic Infirmity:

Closure of economic activities for almost a year has had a severe adverse effect on the students. While sudden reduced or no income in the family due to closure of economic activities has led to a tremendous income crisis in very many families, it has severely affected the psyche of students as well.

According to a recent study by experts at the University of Pennsylvania, University of Chicago and the Mumbai-based Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE), nearly eighty four percent of the Indian households are witnessing dismaying reduction in income since the lockdown began. It is also said that over ninety percent of the households have been most severely affected and around eighty-eight percent of rural households report a sizable fall in income due to lockdown. An alarming revelation of the study relates to a "sharp and broad negative impact on household income" as the pandemic diminished their staying capacity with nearly a third of all households exasperating that they would not be able to survive beyond a week without additional assistance. This exacting analysis finds validation in the unemployment rate which sees a drastic rise in the present situation causing perturbing bearing on the families and has direct linkages to the family's ability to procure resources necessary to enable their wards to pursue studies during difficult times of pandemic. Households in the lower middle-income groups are hurt disproportionately more perhaps because they are most likely to be dependent on sources of income that is hit due to the lockdown, the study's authors stated. "The households with salaried jobs, with the ability to work from home and continue to earn a living were less affected but other households depending upon earning on day-to-day basis have been hit worst.

Rural households have seen disproportionately more distress in this context than those in urban India during the lockdowns. Incomes have fallen at some eighty-eight percent of rural households, compared to seventy-five percent at urban households, the study found. Higher-income households in urban India have shown more "resilience" than their rural counterparts. That is because working out of home is possible for many urban jobs, and therefore they are "relatively protected," the authors noted.

This economic brunt has had a direct impact on the students' ability to procure resources belonging to this segment of the society. The compulsion of buying smart phones/ computers or tablets and meeting the recurring expenditure of having internet access has been a challenge for many students that have hit them most. Also, the economic infirmity has had perceptible

turbulence in family lives which range from domestic violence, arguments, squabbles and even suicides causing tremendous mental pressure on the students with effect on their studies.

2. Social isolation & boredom:

An equally serious issue affecting the students has been the sudden confusion in their social lives. The pandemic has created a degree of panic, fear, and anxiety in the society unprecedented in recent times. The social disruptions occurring after advent of the pandemic like protracted quarantine, social distancing and self-isolation, distress buying, constant fear of getting infected, disruption of normal life, panic and fear, minimum human interaction etc. has led to a unusual sense of isolation and despondency which has affected everyone drastically.

Such disruption has had visible behavioural problems amongst students. Alongwith such critical issues have been other grim problems like the prevalent irresponsibility within society, lack of dignity extended to people dying from Covid in hospitals and effect on the pandemic on the elderly people which have had grim effect on the learners.

Tough times being faced by front-liners and their families have also created great stress amongst all. There have been so many other social consequences which have emerged during the pandemic crisis such as the stoppage of religious gathering, celebration of social functions etc.. There is then a constant fear about the uncertainty regarding the fate of the virus and the people.

3. Inability to Adapt to New learning Mode:

Inability to learn and disseminate of knowledge through the electronic medium is less satisfying for the teachers and is less effective for the students. Interaction with several professors substantiates this point. Teachers indicate that online teaching can never substitute classroom teaching can never substitute classroom sessions for the effect of eye to contact and interactive discussions is not possible in online classes.

Also, surveys have revealed that students have found it difficult to understand the lessons delivered through

online classes. This is in addition to the inability of students to engage in practical classes for science and other courses requiring ‘learning by doing’. Also, poor internet connectivity, erratic power supply and inadequate physical infrastructure have also added to the misery of students substantially.

E-learning, being the latest wave of education is having a fair show despite posing challenges for both teachers and students. While instructors are putting in intensive work and time to design the instruction, students are struggling to prepare themselves with proficiency to decode the teachings. There are 5 common problems faced by students in eLearning classes and which they need to be solved through proper initiatives for the students’ future benefits:

4. Adaptability Struggle:

Switching from traditional classroom and face to face learning to computer-based learning in virtual classrooms has made the learning experience completely different for students. Some are unable to adapt to the new method, while others find it as an opportunity to evade the teaching sessions conveniently. Also, the inherent resistance to change doesn’t encourage them to accustom to the online learning environment and new methods of computer-based education. Students with a “traditional” mindset find it difficult to adapt; though situation demands a shift in their mindset, and accept the new learning circumstances with an open mind and heart. Understanding the benefits of eLearning and even discussing them with their peers may change this mindset and better prepare students for online classes.

5. Technical Issues:

Many students staying in remote areas face strong internet connection that online courses require, and thus fail to catch up with their virtual classmates. Unable to follow their Course they get disinterested and disillusioned about their future. Moreover, most of them live off campus and find it difficult to keep in tune with the technical requirements of the chosen course. Some of them do not have computers or smart phones and have to go to the Learning Resource Centers

for attending classes. Understanding the difficulty, Government has taken steps to telecast classroom lectures but the effectiveness of these classes has not been much for want of adequate information amongst the students as to how they would be able to use it effectively.

6. Computer Adeptness:

Although students have knowledge about computers and are able to work with computers, lack of computer proficiency often obstructs their learning through online mode. This is especially with the smaller children. Many of the students are unable to work on basic programs like Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. Moreover, at times, some students are unable to fix basic computer related issues as they have no knowledge in this area and thus cannot manage their assignments and courseware in an organized manner.

7. Time Management:

Time management is a difficult task for E-learners, as online courses require a lot of time and intensive work. Furthermore, whereas it is mostly adults who prefer web-based learning programs for their place and time flexibility, they rarely have the time to take the courses due to their various everyday commitments. A regular schedule planner would be a significant help to these learners, as they could even set reminders for their courses and assignments.

8. Self-Motivation:

Self-motivation is necessary for students however it is observed that many online learners lack it completely. As a result, many students do not attend to their e-classes seriously. Depending solely upon the course material only, they fall behind and after sometime are disconnected with their studies. This leads to depression and other severe behavioural issues with serious implications.

Pandemic and Behavioural Aftershocks

The behavioral aftershocks to COVID-19 pandemic have thus been manifold. Fear of infection, uncertainty about the

future, inability to adapt to the newly imposed sedentary lifestyle, lack of social interaction and several other related factors have triggered serious physical and psychological problems amongst the students like mental impairment, boredom, stigma, worry, phobia, frustration and anger. In many cases, fear has caused depression, anxiety, perceived infectability besides the anxiety about stigmatization and discrimination of those infected by COVID-19. Studies have also related it to symptoms of withdrawal, introverted behaviour and disorientation also.

Ravichandran et.al (2020) finds evidence of adverse psychological impact of on students like symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress respectively. Changes in Daily Habits Analysis on sleep quality have also been indicated that there has been a rise in sleep disturbances, a critical condition associated with anxiety, depression, and suicidal behavior. In some cases, diminished sleep has also led to short temperament and, as a consequence, complicated family cohabitation.

1. Fear and Anxiety:

Perhaps the most important effect of the pandemic has been a rise of fear and anxiety. This fear and anxiety born out of constant inflow of news from the audio-visual media and other communication channels like cellphones, print media and word-of-mouth tales have often led to serious adverse outcomes. Numerous reports of suicidal behavior due to fear-related issues, fear of being infected, fear of infecting others, fear of being quarantined and fear of the mental health impact have heightened the panic situation.

An interesting inquiry related to news monitoring that higher averages of time spent focusing on the virus outbreak was positively correlated to the development of anxiety symptoms, but also with social responsibility values and compliance to social distancing recommendations among US adolescents. Contrarily, less engagement in risk prevention behaviors was observed in individuals who were apparently prone to "optimism bias," the belief that they are less likely to acquire the disease than others. This principle is also seen in other diseases, including lung cancer.

Yet another study assessing the changes in eating and lifestyle habits of 3,533 individuals, aged between 12

and 86 years, observed that 34.4% of responders had increased appetite during this period, whereas 17.8% had less appetite. Nearly half of the participants perceived weight gain during the pandemic. Additionally, it was observed that although there were no differences in physical activity in the group of individuals who did not play any sports before the COVID-19 lockdown, the training frequency has increased amongst those who were physically active. Around 3% of smokers have quit smoking in this period, probably due to the fear concerning increased risk of respiratory distress and mortality from COVID-19.

Individualized Response to Stress In times of psychological distress, emotional reactivity is deeply influenced by individual differences and stress-mediated contexts.

2. Anxiety and Depression:

Anxiety levels are being significantly increasing in society during this pandemic. A research found an increase in words that mirror negative emotions including anxiety, depression, and anger. One particular kind of anxiety is worth mentioning: health anxiety. It is characterized mainly by catastrophic misinterpretations of bodily sensations, dysfunctional beliefs about health and illness and maladaptive coping behaviors. Harmful consequences can derive from this condition, including excessive hand washing, social withdrawal, panic purchasing and overspending in resources such as hand sanitizers, medications and protective masks. In fact, especially for the suspected cases of COVID-19, the development of obsessive-compulsive symptoms may be a consequence of anxiety related to their health status. The same rising tendency has been seen for depressive symptoms. Interestingly, groups with less education seem to be more susceptible to these manifestations in an epidemic context, especially due to unreliable access to information and apprehension to its academic formation.

3. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder:

Another alarming condition that can be expected to increase is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), similar or worse to what happened in previous epidemics, such as H1N1 Influenza and Ebola. The adverse effects of

this illness are not manifested immediately and mental health support must be prepared to deal with this issue in a few months though studies indicate the COVID-19 pandemic in many cases has intensified psychological disorders or precipitated others, for instance, anxiety, depression, Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), disruption in eating habits, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, panic and paranoia etc.

It has also been reported that PTSD is more likely to take place after longer periods of social disconnection and it is associated with increased suicide risk by 2–5 times. PTSD patients are also found to be less prone to seek help from authorities, possibly due to few available information about this subject, fear of stigmatization, beliefs that symptoms may disappear over time and concerns about the cost of mental healthcare.

Looking towards the Future

It is time to realize that the future will not be a continuation of the past. It will be a series of discontinuities. And only by accepting these discontinuities and doing something about them will we stand any chance of success and survival in the twenty-first century.

Within the institutions, policy-making must outgrow its past and respond to the unknown effectively, demanding radical changes in both content and process and formulate a futuristic functional policy for education for tomorrow. It must set its own agenda; invent contemporary content and newer methods, incorporate innovative technologies and implement it to attain its strategic goals of this sector. It must redefine the borders of education sector and be prepared to take a quantum leap from known to the unknown effectively.

Introspective improvements in the institutions' functioning would therefore, be necessary. The older objectives inclined towards conventionalism in education as a discipline would have to be replaced by harnessing emerging opportunities; order has to be created out of chaos. Developing a unique migration path to the future would not impossible. The pivotal role to be played here would be by the educators who must understand the holistic form of education and create an environment where enthusiasm replaces inertia; where dedication eclipses indifference; and where education leaders consider action more important than planning. To manage such change effectively, knowledge

and intelligence must be the critical factors. Academic institutions would have to stay ahead of the change curve, constantly defining their scope, creating newer avenues of learning, blazing new trails, reinventing competitive rules, and challenging the status quo.

Educators need an obsession to address to the above. As the future is unknown, the institutions could thrive only if they are capable of changing its structure, processes, workflow, and information systems at will and quite frequently. It should also be prepared to respond to the needs of the times very fast, be flexible and bale to reconfigure itself constantly. For that, hierarchies should be replaced by networks, where work and data flow at all directions, making it conscious and alive, intelligent, and the product of human imagination, not a machine bureaucracy. Overcoming traditional organizational obstacles that impede a speedy adoption and implementation of strategies would be paramount.

The only way to create such an organization is a swift dissociation from the past. Incremental improvements might help but what is needed is a radical shift from the present to a desired state and it needs courage to take bold decisions. There is an urgent need to appreciate that there is no pit stop on the race to future; nowhere to rest up and reinvent. In fact, the process of transformation must become a race itself. The institutions would never get back to the race if it were slow in its moves. It would have to achieve the radical metamorphosis while the race is in progress. This calls for a total reorientation of the institution in terms of the people, process, systems, structure and culture. If it were able to challenge the present and explore the newer inroads to the future, it would manage change; otherwise it would be overtaken by change.

Ensuring Support Mechanisms: Some Suggestions

The outbreak of the pandemic COVID -19 and its resultant emotional physical, mental and emotional concerns presupposes specific attention and redressal across all educational and personal platforms. Considering the magnitude of the issues, a holistic approach would be immediately needed to disgorge the students from such a difficult condition. It is time to extend an empathetic and patient approach towards all the students to enable them to face the situation positively.

While the Government of India through their novel initiative ‘Manodarpan’ have tried to reach out to such students and mobilize Psychosocial Support to provide psychosocial wellbeing of students country-wide in a comprehensive and multimodal manner, the teachers, parents, families and everyone connected to them a vital role to play in this respect.

- Parents and Families - Closely discern your child and take note of change in patterns of emotions and behaviour of children such as excessive worry or sadness; avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past; difficulty with attention and concentration; bedwetting; irritability and unrestrained and difficult behaviors in adolescents and unexplained abdominal ache or body pain etc. and if these symptoms persist, may take professional advice.

During these difficult times, how we express our emotions in our family including our children helps much in safeguards themselves from emotional distress. Be lively, share information and share health related guidelines circulated by the government of India and health agencies like washing hands, like using handkerchief while coughing / sneezing, applying, and avoiding any social gathering etc. Some of the steps that parents/ families can take are given below.

- Share authentic information and facts about COVID-19; it would reduce fear. Relate positive and hopeful stories and images of people who have experienced COVID-19.
- Be caring. Let children share how they are feeling and let them know you are always there with them.
- Allow children to ask questions; listen attentively to their queries and ensure that they know that they can come to you when they have any concern.
- Addressing children’s concerns eases their anxiety. Assure them that they are secure. Counsel them; clarify doubts, confusions and let them know that it is natural to feel confused, upset or worried during times like these.
- Seek professional help in extreme cases of distress.
- Be your children’s friend. Spend time with them, tell them interesting stories, anecdotes and engage in a creative activity with them.
- Be a role model to your child.

Principals and Teachers – Teachers may help students in various aspects as mentioned below.

- Prepare for online examinations and organize career orientation sessions. Teachers may inspire students to write their sentiments and state of mind, reservations and doubts. Students may also be enthused to write positive stories, of what new skills they have developed being at home, how they are enjoying their time with family; let them post pictures or videos also shares stories and propagate it through the institution website so that other students may also get motivated and do something exciting. This will reduce the pressures created due to uncertainty in examinations.
- Engage students in creative activities that can help them express their feelings in a safe and supportive environment and would help eliminate emotions like fear or anxiety. Teachers should have the onus of caring the emotional and well-being of students.
- Constant counseling and encouraging students as mentors and reassuring them about the safety and security of their ‘Present’ and ‘Future’.
- Motivating students to engage in creative activities beyond their studies and answering queries promptly.
- Having dialogue with parents to constantly support their children and conduct necessary inputs on health education, mental health & wellbeing classes.
- Teachers may closely observe their pupils, take note of any symptoms of stress in children and immediately take appropriate action in association with parents. Even short meditation sessions could be started before online classes; it is expected that this would help reduce tension and stress and increase feelings of well-being.

Students - It is time for the students to realize the gravity of the situation and develop the ability to cope in adverse times. They have to be brave, confident and face odds boldly. Students must understand how they must deal with an immediate crisis and what their priorities are.

- As adolescent, students going through the lockdown period and spending time away from school and peer group can bring forth a range of coping difficulties. This could, in fact, be an opportunity for a very new kind of learning to take place and help oneself to be aware, responsible and empowered.

- Students have to appreciate that learning is lifelong process. It is time to be accountable; take charge of the situation and respond accordingly. They have to plan their routine as per the ‘new-normal times’ and use the available time optimally.
- Some of the ways could be following one’s passion and try to discover, as per Johari’s Window, their ‘Hidden Self’ and work to nurture it.
- Yet another important action that students might take it to enjoy the company of parents, family, teachers and friends and share thoughts, views and feelings.

Preparing for Tomorrow

The present situation indicates certain definite shifts in the pattern of creating and delivering education in post covid-19 times:

- Blended learning is likely to become a reality with more inclusion of electronic mode of learning
- Training of teachers will have to be qualitatively different with more stress on ICT based teaching. This would include classroom teaching, providing online reading material, evolving newer methods of evaluation
- Teachers will have to be trained for online teaching as well. This will go a long way to ensure that they are comfortable with technology and will be able to seamlessly switch between online and offline modes of teaching the curriculum. And above all, teachers will feel empowered to deliver a more impactful lecture than before.
- Academic institutions have to be equipped with adequate ICT hardware and software to augment the new mode of learning. The classrooms need to be connected with internet; audio-visual aids, computers and other gadgets necessary for ICT enabled teaching. Also, the library should have an electronic repository with access to remote learning resources. Besides, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) should be maximized to help personalize the learning experience for the students..
- Teachers have to redefine their role from a ‘knowledge-giver’ to a ‘facilitator’ in the development of learners and enable them to become life-long learners.
- The quality of online teaching will have to be more interactive and students have to be more engaged in the

learning process. A high degree of innovation in this domain area will help much in this respect.

- When in schools/ colleges to keep safe distance between students. Academic institutions will have to rethink their infrastructure and reconfigure systems, structure and strategies to cope with the new situation
- All schools and colleges would have to have structured counseling mechanism to address any kind of emotional trauma or disturbance in the students' mind.

Epilogue

It is for certain that the Post covid-19 world will be a different place; there will be perceptible changes in the way the world lives. If not the Covid but its impact will remain for a fairly long time. There is likely to be radical change in content and process as far as the education sector is concerned. While all the constituents of the education sector have to prepare adequately to bring the newly devised blended learning approach for delivering good education and quality resource, students have to rise up to the occasion and emerge as a stronger individual adapting to the newer mode of learning.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Transformations in Medical Education during Post COVID Times

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Abstract

Unprecedented are the events that the world is witnessing with the COVID-19 disease spree that unfolded in the late 2019 and as the article is being written, it is continuing with even greater momentum. No man has been left unscathed in this great conundrum; no sphere of man's activity has been left unaffected. While it is arguable whether the impact of the pandemic is far reaching in all areas of human efforts and businesses, education can certainly be earmarked as one of the important sectors that have been severely jolted in the aftermath of the pandemic.

This article focuses on the transformational effects of COVID-19 on medical education in India and elsewhere. Needless to say, healthcare has been on the forefront now to deliver a solution to the human affliction by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. A means to be able to educate the young budding doctors of tomorrow in the restricted environment of human movement and activities has indeed thrown up a daring challenge. As man would never be bound by the chains of hopelessness and inaction, it has responded with zeal to circumvent. The efforts have resulted in innovations, up-gradations, resource development in the field of education. A collective summary of these transformations is being presented here.

The Methods adopted in this context are significant and needs special mention. India and the rest of the world resorted to online or e-learning as a quick adaption to the traditional system of face to face learning. In medical education too e-learning was introduced as colleges were compelled to lockdown. Several e learning tools such as Google meet, Team viewer, Zoom and discussion forums of Blackboard, Moodle, Schoology have been effectively utilized to simulate real world scenarios to educate medical students in the spirit of competence based medical education. Some of the challenges faced by

the teachers and students can be summarized as having poor technical skills and a negative attitude to change, inadequate infrastructure support, difficulty to integrate clinical exposure and acquirement of clinical skills, time management constraints and communication bottlenecks, and retaining active engagement of students. E learning methodologies have evolved with numerous online tools to assist planning, communication, activities, feedback and assessments. These can provide excellent solutions to the problems encountered in online teaching.

While online learning has advantages of crossing geographical barriers, is quick and convenient, flexible and allows independence to students to pace their learning. The drawback is its inability to replicate clinical rotation experience and thereby restrict clinical skill development. But these challenges can be overcome by collaboration of the institution, faculty and students and integration of advanced online teaching methods in the curricula in a never before imagined manner. The full impact of the transformations imposed by COVID-19 on education will only be felt after a long time. Future studies should record systematically and quantitatively of the changes occurring and challenges faced in implementing e learning to facilitate advanced learning capabilities and opportunities.

Introduction:

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory infection caused by the novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). SARS-CoV-2 is highly transmissible, currently estimated to be 2 times more so than seasonal influenza (1). It has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) (2).

The WHO alerted the world of several atypical pneumonia cases in Wuhan, China, on December 31, 2019. The cases

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were mysterious as no apparent cause could be assigned prompting WHO to start investigations. The source was traced to a seafood market in Wuhan but the cause was still elusive. By January 7th, a new strain of coronavirus was identified and named; SARS-COV-2. By January 31st, there were several thousand cases reported globally. WHO declared a “global emergency” (3).

By March, many countries had been affected by the virus, and the pandemic status was declared. This resulted in an unprecedented public health response. Social distancing was enforced by governments as it became clear that the virus could be transmitted by aerosols and droplets from infected people and the transmissibility was much greater than other flu viruses. Subsequently desperate containment measures including nation-wide shutdowns were imposed. This led to college and school closures, banning of public events, closure of businesses, higher educational and public institutions; and stay-at-home orders (4). Limiting contact is a strategy that attempts to decrease both the frequency and duration of contacts which in turn reduces the basic reproduction number, R_0 , the average number of persons to whom one case transmits the disease during his/her incubation period.

The introduction of these measures had a profound impact the education sector. These included medical schools. Students had to return home. Schools resorted to continuing courses through online resources. Examinations were being cancelled, postponed, or adjusted in format. Continued medical education in the form of symposia, workshops and national and internal conferences were halted and later held online (5).

This pandemic is proving to be a significant challenge to our health and care services. So, who is preparing the doctor of tomorrow? Till the day COVID-19 struck, doctors were being churned of a well-developed medical education system; but a system, which could not bend to a cataclysmic pandemic. The pandemic brought both clarity and urgency to the purpose of designing curricula of health education that would in the future be able to address the improvement of major morbidities and mortality in our communities and population at large (6).

The health education system had to become fluid in order to respond to the crises that propagated from the city of Wuhan in China in late December, 2019. At one end, there was a huge demand for all physicians to jump into saving lives from the deadly scourge of the virus, on the other the medical educators had the onus of leading their students into learning to respond

to a pandemic of epic proportions. Medical students have volunteered so that they can assist as part of the workforce. The territories of new teaching modalities were unknown to both the teacher and the taught and each had to innovate on a daily basis to keep the spirit of education alive.

Impact of COVID 19 on Medical Education: the Global Scenario

The impact of the pandemic on medical student education has been significant in the UK. In a survey of 33 UK medical schools, final year medical students reported facing unprecedented challenges from transitioning from student to doctor amidst changes assessment formats, cancelled assistantships and expectation of early joining of workforce to meet the demands of the pandemic on an overburdened healthcare system (7). In another questionnaire based survey amongst 3,348 Libyan medical students who had been trained one leaning systems, 64.7% did not agree that e learning systems could be implemented easily for medical education; majority also disagreed that e learning could be utilized for clinical aspects. Only 27.7% had participated in online medical education during COVID-19 (8). Worldwide the scenario remains similar; panic in the student community is palpable. One of the greater challenges to adapt to transformations of the education system is to reengage students and keep them motivated.

Scenario in India

In March 2020, the nation went to an unexpected lockdown. The medical community had a much greater challenge ahead: to understand the impact of the disease on mankind, to treat the affected and to tide over the already overworked healthcare system, for it to respond to the disaster unfolding. The teachers in medical education had a dual challenge: to keep their students safe during a clinical session with a SARS-CoV-2 positive patient, or if the student tested positive, to keep the patient and fellow students and professors unharmed and secondly, to prioritize engagement in the clinical workforce in treating COVID 19 patients due to greater demand of treating doctors (9).

Most medical schools in the wake of social distancing and lockdown had to close, compelling both the students and

teachers to work from home. Didactic lectures classes, practical, tutorials, journal clubs, seminars, clinical postings in the ward, outpatient department and operation theatres ceased; even workshops, symposia and conferences had to be cancelled. Caught unawares in the urgency of this never before encountered situation and under no specific directives from statutory bodies, each college explored online learning options for its students (10).

At present, few colleges have invested in online platforms for live stream classes or display recorded lectures. E learning opportunities are now available and shared worldwide in never before imagined ways (Figure 1). Since students already use the internet to access teaching resources, there is no perceived difficulty in students adapting to online didactic teaching.

Moreover, the trial access/free version of various online streaming/conferencing tools and free/less costly internet data packages from telecom companies have made it possible to reach individual students and teach them. All of these teaching/learning tools can be easily accessed, even from mobile devices. Above all, various publishers have started providing free access to e resources materials, including e books, e journals, and databases during this pandemic period. The best approach would be to implement a learning management system (LMS) which integrates several elements of holistic learning such as integrated virtual classroom, monitoring and evaluation system, strong collaborative tools, competency-based learning, quick content creation and much more (11).

Major Hindrances to e-learning and Plausible Solutions

The challenges to medical education due to e-learning are naturally manifold (12). Briefly these have been discussed with plausible solutions.

Integration of clinical exposure in the online system

One of the greatest concerns in educating the future doctor is the ability to offer the experience of clinical exposure which traditionally occurs when a student is posted for clinical rotations in the ward, OPD, intensive care and surgery. The skills acquired through interactive communication with

patients in a real-world scenario are the hardest to replicate. Videos, podcasts and collaborative webinars are being used to simulate the real learning environment such as use of e Problem-based Learning (e PBL) which has been utilized by educators as a powerful and engaging student-centered pedagogy (13). Webinars are also helpful in case studies, inquiry based learning and collaborative learning. Break out class room technique promises better skill learning in such areas. Interactive learning groups, such as small group case-based learning and team-based learning can continue during the COVID-19 pandemic through webinars and teleconferences and perhaps provides an insight into how medical school will look going forward.

Lack of educators' skill sets to use technology efficiently

This has been the foremost challenge faced. The usage on online teaching tools in medical education was limited in the pre-pandemic times. Naturally teachers had very little experience or training. Insufficient training or aversion towards technology-based tools of professors has negatively impacted the delivery of online teaching. Both teachers and students may develop a negative attitude to e-learning arising out of many factors. It is the institution's responsibility to bridge the learning gap by providing training of e learning systems and motivate teachers to adapt best to the new technical scenario of delivering lectures. The students may suffer from inaccessibility to e tools, poor internet access and connectivity.

Time management and scheduling

Transition from an existing schedule to a new one needed meticulous planning, rewriting content, building new presentation formats. The urgent swapping did not give the teachers sufficient time to reframe teaching methods. Over and above, they had to cope with the mental and physical stress of managing COVID 19 patients during the pandemic. The students were equally perturbed by the sudden change in the teaching modality and many found it difficult to align with online classes and build up necessary clinical skills at the same time. One of the ways to circumvent time management issues is to plan lecture schedules and communicate the timings and study materials to students in advance. One of the pedagogical tools to manage time

is the use of *flipped classroom strategy*. Here students are asked to learn the content outside the class so the in-time class is best spent in interacting and absorbing material for skill development. Another tool is for teachers to *upload pre-recorded lectures* which the student can view as per their convenience in their preferred environment. They can rewind and replay to grasp content and also play it in double speed so that a 60 min lecture can be viewed in 30 min.

Poor infrastructure and resources

India is an economically resource poor country. In the field of technology, rural areas still do not have enough infrastructure to give access to students with smart devices and/or internet connectivity. The same has been recorded from neighboring Pakistan in a field study (14). Therefore, a significant proportion of medical students who have returned home may be devoid of resources to carry out their online education. This is indeed a great deterrent to the establishment of online teaching. As per statistics of digital in India as of January 2021 report, internet penetration of India stands at mere 45% vis a vis China which has 70.4 % and USA having 96.6% internet penetration (15). Social media users in our country increased by 21% between 2020 and 2021; 32.3% of the total population were social media users while 79% had mobile connections.

Infrastructure buildup is the priority of the government. In spite of progress made in this arena, lot of catching up needs to be done which should be prioritized to make digital transformations in the education sector possible in the near future.

Student engagement and partnership learning

The success of online teaching largely depends on student's acceptability of the platform (16) and finding methods of keeping the students engaged as many factors as discussed above, both human and technological, may disrupt the learning system (8). The biggest drawback is the inability to simulate the excitement that is derived from face to face interactions, clinical practice in the real field and motivations that come from offline group discussions and even social interactions.

There is a need for making the lectures interactive, oriented

towards student's participation like inclusion of quizzes or instant short questions, reduced cognitive overload, and not the least, limiting class time. It may be best to deliver lectures as interactive modules, and dividing the content into several segments (segmentation principle). Participation in daily webinars may become monotonous after a while. Therefore, it is imperative to engage students in preparing learning designs, discuss troublesome learning issues, engage in higher thinking skills, and restructure learning tasks if necessary, to solve issues that students are struggling with. To simplify, a continuous feedback system should be put in place and students should be allowed to participate in developing marking rubrics. Content delivery should drive active participation in obtaining timely feedback and revised content sharing should address negative feedback and fill in knowledge gaps. The purpose of feedback is reducing discrepancies between understanding performance and outcome. Some feedback tools are *Turnitin and Vocaroo for audio feedback*.

There are several social media tools such as WhatsApp, You Tube, Discord, etc. which may be effectively used for medical education. Group work and collaboration are key features of online learning. But group based learning have to address conflict issues within members due to dominant personalities, introversion, non-contribution by some members, time management issues, lack of clear group objectives, personality clashes, intolerance towards members etc. It is essential to teach students to collaborate. *Sparkplus* is a web based peer review tool that enables students to confidentially rate their own and their peers' contributions to a team task or individual submissions. *Google forms* can also be used to calculate relative performance but is a tad cumbersome.

Assessment

As the focus of National Education Policy 2020 is competency based curriculum, and efforts are ongoing to realize the same goal within the medical education framework (17), assessment of students would involve evaluating skill development, i.e., what the student can perform rather than what the student knows. Through the online learning process, student assessment should be in the form of "formative learning evaluations" rather than "summative learning". There are several online assessment tools such as *Kahoot, Socrative, Quizlet Live, Nearpod*

and *Google quizzes* through Google forms. Summative assessment can be done through modified essay questions, assignments and open book exams. Open book exams can be imparted in the restrictive mode (can bring in personal notes only) or in the “fully open” mode, but questions need to be designed in a careful manner that requires skill and time. Some LMS platforms provide portfolio tools such as Talk Stream that allow learners to build online repositories of work, experience, reflections etc. Psychomotor domain assessment becomes very challenging in this platform; virtual patient, making video of an experiment, virtual clinical examinations are some ways to assess.

Comparison of Online Learning versus Traditional Learning

Experiences of e learning applications that are being rigorously practiced today are at most a year old. Teething problems remain. With time there will gradual accumulation of end users’ experience and also discovery of new ideas to solve problems. This, combined with technological advancements, may give online learning an edge in certain areas. While traditional models accrue better clinical skills, greater teacher support and more social interaction; e learning is low cost, allows for flexibility, provides independent learning opportunities, and is convenient as it cuts down on travel, space requirements, and rigidity in schedules (18). As the world embroils in the second and third waves of COVID 19 upsurge (19, 20), adaption to e learning is no longer a choice or luxury but a matter of necessity.

Conclusion

Necessity is the mother of invention! As the saying goes, medical education, post pandemic, has smartly adapted to educating the doctors of the future. While it is clearly understood that the education of medicine cannot be delivered wholeheartedly and in the true spirit over electronic media, nevertheless, technology has been powerful enough to have carved a permanent place in the manner in which education will be imparted in the future. The year 2020 brought disruption, chaos and confusion in the education sector but, in its wake, taught the world the wonders of technology, the application of which had been very restricted. 2020 was the year that ushered a change,

albeit with unsure baby steps. The year 2021 is seeing the second surge of the pandemic but as educators or as students we are better prepared to teach or being taught, as we have accepted that technology is here to stay. At least we can say that the process of transformation in the increased use of technology in medical education is in its early phase, with a rapid and progressive individual and collective acceptance by both medical teachers and students. There is also the commitment of medical colleges to the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning. This transformative change may be embedded permanently with previous teaching modules in near future, by giving a greater emphasis on online learning and the use of mobile devices to replace face to face group teaching and meetings. The medical teachers/educators will need to develop and implement innovative solutions in response to this present demand of use of technology to prepare for future. Artificial intelligence and virtual reality may allow this revolution to happen in teaching medicine.

While challenges remain, solutions are being brought to the table each day to overcome every difficulty. This is progressive and revolutionary. Today, we might not be able to fathom the full impact COVID-19 on medical education. It will be important to keep tab on the full extent of transformations that took place in response to this national emergency. In the future decades to come, a medical student may be asked of what he had learnt in the pandemic of 2020. Students will be able to respond that they were not in the sidelines, they were a part of a very important change; they experienced a paradigm shift in the way medicine was taught and learnt; how they were taught to respond to medical challenges of magnifying proportions and to rise up to new levels of professional commitment. History may not have given a better time than today to learn and experience of what it means to be a part of healthcare.

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Figure 1: Online tools frequently used to impart online medical education

Purpose	Tool
Online teaching	Webex https://www.webex.com/
	Zoom https://zoom.us/
	Google meet https://gsuite.google.com/products/meet/
	Team Viewer https://www.teamviewer.com//
	Skype https://www.skype.com/
Discussion forums	Blackboard https://www.blackboard.com/
e PBL	Loom https://www.loom.com/
e Practicals	Moodle https://moodle.org
	Schoology https://www.schoology.com/
e clinical skills training	

PBL: problem based learning

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Role of Online Teaching-Learning in Education in the Post COVID-19 Era

Rimpa Saha *

Abstract

This paper explores the significance and growing importance of online education and the role of teachers in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has necessitated new modes of thinking and functioning to accommodate the worldwide restrictions on physical contact. All industries, however big or small, are presently in the process of realigning their vision and mission in keeping with the phenomenal changes brought about by the pandemic. In education virtual teaching-learning is gaining ground like never before. While online learning offers a number of obvious advantages, disadvantages, too, are fairly common. This paper provides a holistic analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of online teaching-learning in the context of the changes instigated by the pandemic. It studies the major challenges of transmission of knowledge from a predominantly classroom-based education to a predominantly virtual one. In its endeavour of doing so, this study uses a qualitative method of investigation to trace the evolution of online education through a series of pandemic-induced lockdowns to the present time.

Keywords: E-learning, COVID-19 pandemic, Role of teachers, Advantages and disadvantage of e- learning.

Introduction

Education is a lifelong process obtaining which is not just limited to specific educational institutions. Knowledge may be acquired either through formal or informal education. It is vital to for the progress of both individual and society. Teachers – the primary disseminators of knowledge

– therefore play a very significant role in facilitating knowledge among learners. Hence, it is no surprise that the teaching-learning method is of central importance in all progressive societies. In the 21st century, we have seen the advent of various forms of teaching-learning processes, such as smart classrooms, ICT-based classrooms etc. These new modes of dissemination of knowledge have had a transformative effect not only on the educational system but also on the society. The present time is one dominated by technology. Every aspect of our lives are, in one way or the other, shaped and influenced by technology. The giant strides taken by technology through the last few decades have changed the way we perceive the world, the way we work, the way we live our lives. The phenomenal progress of technology has introduced innovations that would have been literally unthinkable in earlier times. Likewise, we have witnessed changes introduced by technology that have transformed our society and, consequently, the educational system.

We all know about the COVID-19 virus. This deadly virus has forced governments across the world to shut down offices and educational institutions (Radha et al., 2020). It also had a profound effect on our educational system. During this time the prevalent classroom-based or offline teaching was converted to an online or virtual mode to facilitate social distancing as a means to curb rapid contagion. Traditional teaching-learning soon made way for a virtual, no-contact mode of disseminating and acquiring knowledge. Almost overnight, e-learning became a mainstream mode of imbibing knowledge. E-learning offered many advantages, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when physical contact had to be reasonably minimized (Radha et al., 2020).

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Literature Review

The literature on the subject indicates important facets of the subject. **Chaudhary** (2020) examines that effect of ICT orientation, perceived service quality trust and perceived service quality in times of COVID-19. It applied a qualitative methodology to analyse 417 samples collected from a Pakistan University. In this study the results revealed that ICT orientation has an affirmative effect on students' satisfaction and significantly mediate the relationship between ICT orientation and university brand performance. This study provides useful insights on how institutes of higher learning can enhance and maintain their brand performance and students satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic by adopting ICT tools.

In a study, Radha (2020) investigates the attitudes of students towards e-learning. A sample of one hundred and seventy-five respondents, selected through stratified sampling technique has been used in this study. Analysis of the data, collected from across the world, revealed that e-learning came to be perceived as very interesting by students across the world during the pandemic.

Hasan and Khan (2020), in a study focused on the online teaching-learning method that became prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. A qualitative survey was used in this study. Four hundred eight respondents from Manipur University, Aligarh Muslim University and various colleges affiliated to these institutions of higher learning provided the data. In this study, the finding showed that students enjoyed this new mode of learning. It revealed that while proper technological facilities could significantly improve students' experience of learning offered through the new mode, poor network connectivity could interfere with the quality of knowledge dissemination.

E-learning

E-learning is commonly used to refer to the international use of networked information and communication technology in teaching and learning. (Chitra and Ray 2018). Different terms are used to indicate this type of learning such as virtual learning, network and web based CBT (computer based training), WBT (Web-Based Training) and IBT (Internet-based training). As the letter 'e' in e learning stands for the word "electronic" it incorporates all educational activities that are carried out online through an electronic device.

E learning has different features. It is a web-based system of instruction that indicates that one can install any software whatever one needs and connect to the internet. By doing so, one can watch, listen, learn and engage in a host of other interactive teaching-learning activities on a computer screen.

E-learning offers a completely new learning environment to students, thus requiring specific skill sets (Romiszowski 2004, Chitra and Raj 2018). All lectures are delivered virtually. Students can learn any time and from anywhere. It is therefore turning out to be one of the most effective and convenient ways of learning at one's own pace.

Objectives:

The objectives of the paper are basically to know and highlight the significance of online teaching-learning during COVID-19 pandemic, explore and underline the emerging trends in online teaching-learning resources among teachers and students and to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the online teaching-learning process.

Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature. In the course of this study, the researcher collected relevant data from different national and international journal articles, books, and websites related to the current pandemic. The researcher have also attended many webinars using the ZOOM/ GOOGLE MEET/ WEBEX platforms during the pandemic and have thereby attempted to empirically arrive at the primary problems of the online teaching-learning process and to work out an optimal method for disseminating knowledge among students across multiple virtual platforms.

Findings

The study leads to important findings with respect to the Role of Online Teaching-Learning in Education in the Post COVID-19 Era. The same are enumerated below.

- Significance of Online Teaching-Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the disruption across industries on a global scale (Heng and Sol

2020). It has disrupted multiple sectors including the educational sector affecting thousands of schools, colleges and universities in the process. Consequently, we have seen vast changes transform the education system globally. All education institutions were temporarily closed to contain the spread of the corona virus (Heng and Sol 2020). Overnight, there was an urgent need to transition from a traditional teaching-learning system founded on physical contact to a non-traditional, virtual mode. Norms of social distancing were put in place to curb the rapid spread of the deadly virus. All educational institutions were therefore advised to maintain the relevant COVID-19 protocol initiated worldwide by governments. The teaching-learning process converted to online teaching-learning mode. Given the relative newness of the system and the shock necessitating its abrupt adoption has been a big challenge for students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders. The Government of India has also taken steps to encourage the adoption of online education as part of the compulsory teaching-learning process (Mishra et al 2020). However, virtual teaching-learning is not entirely a new method of knowledge dissemination. Students have been more or less familiar with this new method of teaching learning process before although it was yet to be adopted on a larger scale. In India the students of urban and suburban schools, colleges, and universities were also somewhat familiar with this version of teaching-learning but it proved to be a big challenge for students residing in the rural areas. In spite of many obstacles education sector adopted this new mode of teaching-learning process. It was found to be an alternative and reasonably effective method of disseminating knowledge during the pandemic (Radha et al 2020). Teachers play a vital role in the COVID-19 situation because teachers are the primary mentors and facilitators of knowledge in a system that is not only relatively new but also one that calls for a greater degree of guidance and assistance in order to ensure its success among a sizeable number of students. We all know that teachers often play the role of friend –philosopher and guide to their students. They play the significant role of influencers by helping their students to become socially responsible citizens and, above all, good human beings. During the pandemic various technological interventions were adopted not only to prevent the contagion from

spreading further but also to ensure the usual functioning of economies and societies as far as practicable. In such a situation, teachers became additionally responsible for fostering healthy and humane relationship in an increasingly technology-dominated learning environment. Teachers were expected to have a more empathetic attitude in the context of teaching large populations of students without physical contact and with the help of electronic teaching aids (Das 2020). The major teaching components in such a system are desktop, laptop, Smartphone, and internet connection. The e-learning method is a new academic endeavour for the present-day educator. In this new method student are more likely to gain additional information about various disciplines. Every educational institution has therefore been encouraged to enhance the knowledge and skills of their students through the new digital mode of learning.

- Underline the new trend of online teaching-learning resources among students

During the lock down period when traditional process of teaching-learning transformed into online mode, students had to face many challenges with regard to the abrupt transition. Most students did not have a solid idea about how the digital mode of learning functioned. Students from rural areas and from less privileged background suffered more owing to the lack of knowhow and poor accessibility of the internet. The gap in understanding contributed to a general disengagement from a mode of learning powered dominantly by technology (Dhawan 2020). The virtual mode of learning led to a dwindling sense of community. Owing to the newness of the technology-powered knowledge dissemination system, students struggled with myriad technical problems and difficulties in understanding the technical matter; this is certainly a major barrier in the way of successful online learning (song et al 2004). Many students found it difficult to adapt and adjust to the digital environment. Students were also found to be ill prepared for several e-learning competencies. Also there was inadequate preparation among students concerning the usage of the new learning system (Parkes et al. 2014, Dhawan 2020).

During the pandemic all educational institutes were forced to close their campuses in order to maintain social distancing following the COVID-19 protocol.

This, in turn, prompted educationists to think of ways to continue the education process without risk public health. In this way offline teaching-learning process transitioned into the online mode. Different online platforms such as, Google Meet, Zoom, WebEX etc. were promoted as potential facilitators of digital learning in the wake of the pandemic. Through these platforms students could be instructed via online lectures which could be accessed from individual electronic device. A sample survey on “Household” consumption on education in India” conducted by national Statistical office (NSO) shows that the availability of computers and internet facilities was very low in India. Internet facilities was available to only 23.8% of India’s population (NSO 2019). As per NSO sample survey, a big difference exist between rural and urban population in terms of having computer facilities and the access to the internet. Only 4.4% rural household had computers while 14.4% had internet connection (NSO, 2019). On the other side, the urban area 23.4% of household personal computer while 42% had internet connections. In this survey it was found that a large number of students belong to rural areas where they have poor internet accessibility which hinders virtual learning.

In this situation the biggest challenge for teachers is to ensure the availability and accessibility of virtual mode of learning to all students. Many factors influence students satisfaction with regard to online teaching such as interaction among students and teachers and that between peers, content delivery methods, technical support and service (Roberts et al. ; 2005 and Hasan 2020). Student satisfaction with online classroom is determined by students’ lived experienced of the online classes. (Thurmond et al 2002, Hasan 2020). Students’ satisfaction result shows the quality of learning and teaching in online mode .This new method of teaching-learning encourages students to think creatively and improve their problem solving skills.

In spite of many obstacles it has a positive side. Online learning widens access to learning resources and offers learner flexibility to learn at a pace, place and time suited to individual learners at a given point of time (Chizmar and Walber, 1999, Smith et al 2005, Hasan, 2020). Due to the pandemic there has been offline learning shifted to online learning .That’s why many challenges of online learning not only the teachers but students also

face many challenges like lack of suitable material of learning ,proper internet connection ,incapacity of self-discipline ,and the adequate learning environment during lock down .(Brazendale et al 2017, Soni 2020). teaching –learning process through online learning mode became very challenging for teacher student .Teacher are follow the –administrative and government rules but lack of infrastructure ,lack of unhealthy environment it is not suitable for all students ,students have not to understand the how to learn through online mode. Majority of the students like to learn in traditional method of learning .Poor internet connectivity to internet students have facing very problem during the time of online –classes. Due to lack of motivation and shaky mental health issue E-learning is not providing expected success in the global education system. (Jimoyiannis and Grovani, 2011; Khalid et al; 2016, Soni 2020)

Investigating the advantages and disadvantages of online teaching-learning process Advantages

A critical analysis of the online teaching-learning process points to several advantages and disadvantages. The **advantages** could be enumerated below.

- With online learning, every student and teacher could access learning resources at their own pace and time. The virtual platform thus widened the geographical reach even to rural or remote locations (Jena 2020).
- It was also discovered that in online classes, every class can be recorded or saved and hence can be used for future reference of students as well as for the students.
- Online classes are a type of distance learning courses that could be taking without attending school or university with student and teacher interaction taking place through a virtual medium.
- online classes student could build self-knowledge and self confidence
- In online classes could be taken from home or any preferred location; also there are fewer chances of students missing out on important lessons (Gautam 2020).
- Online classes are especially helpful for those students who are physically challenged or otherwise find it difficult to attend classrooms in person.

- In the online mode, institutions could make use of appropriate software to digitize the evaluation process and increase the overall efficiency.

As are the advantages, several **disadvantages** could also be seen in the study. The same are described below.

- Human interaction considered a critical aspect of teaching-learning process, is missing in learning through the virtual mode
- During lockdown period, the less privileged families could not afford electronic devices required for virtual learning.
- The classroom environment with face-to-face learning transitioned to online mode of learning has resulted in reduced interactions between students and teachers, considered so essential for overall development of young minds.
- Often poor internet connectivity is leading to poor attendance and less interaction in online classes, which is a definite cause of concern.

Suggestions

It is imperative that the Government of India and the Education Department should take serious cognizance of the drawbacks and ensure that teaching –learning process maintains social distancing during any interaction between the teacher and the taught. Some of students and teachers might attend their institutions with shifting process and carry on the educational programme and maintain the Covid -19 protocol.

The Indian Government could developed a new mode of learning process to help continue quality learning in any pandemic situation like the Covid -19. Also, the education policy makers could think and include the remote areas, marginalised group to enable them to easily access the new process of learning.

As internet accession is very much requirement, digital connection should reach the unprivileged society effectively to continue their education process. In Many government and non-government organisations can also play a major role in augmenting the digital education.

Conclusion:

With the newer ways of learning through online mode becoming the ‘New Normal’ phenomenon, it is time for

educational institutions, the teaching fraternity and the students to adapt themselves to the obvious and configure innovative ways so that knowledge could be disseminated to the learners in the most effective manner. This should not only be limited to online teaching but also providing access to ‘e-content’ through libraries and arranging e- guiding sessions to resolve problems that students might face with respect to their course work as well as emotional issues.

As the world continues to face the second onslaught of the pandemic, virtual learning methods are here to stay. This is because there are no apparent alternatives. The present virtual platforms such as, Zoom, Google Meet etc. must help and support the students to study seriously and learn during the COVID-19 crisis.

The government agencies and the teaching fraternity have transformed radically from the classical mode of teaching to the new virtual methods due to COVID-19 outbreak. The challenges have, till now, been surmounted successfully. Now the main challenge for all is to sustain in the changing environment and this can happen only if all concerned are able to respond to this change most effectively.

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Web-based link

- <https://elearningindustry.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-online-learning>
- <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=194921>

FEATURE ARTICLE

WOMEN'S SOCIAL FREEDOM

Jolly Sinha *

Abstract

The socio-economic status of women has been a matter of concern in all societies across the world. India is no different. The ignominious suppression women since ages have and the roles that they have been assigned by the archaic attitude of the male-dominated society, has debated. The social reforms taken in since the last century have liberated women from this miserable condition and have alleviated them to a relative condition. A lot is yet to be done.

The study aims to explore the social condition of women with respect to their job status and qualifications and ascertain the extent to which it affected women's social rights. The research was done with a sample of total one hundred women of Dhanbad town of India. Out of the total sample size, fifty were working (25 High and 25 Low Qualified) and fifty were non-working (25 High and 25 Low Qualified). The Women Social Freedom Scale (WSFS) prepared by L.I. Bhusan (2011) was used to understand the phenomenon. The information was gathered, scored, and measured. The t-test was being computed. Mean, standard deviation, and t value were used as statistical techniques. The current study's research and interpretations showed that working status and qualification had an effect on demand for social freedom. The study's results also revealed that working women showed higher desire for social freedom in comparison to non-working women. Also, high qualified women had higher desire for social freedom comparison to low qualified women.

Keywords: Social Freedom, Women, Profession and Qualification.

Introduction

The sounds of freedom and suppression make a strange

blend – discordant, contradictory and disturbing, but very common in different our societies since ages. And when it is discussed in the context of women, it sheds a harsh light on the stark dichotomy about the social freedom of women who constitute almost half of the total human beings living on planet earth. Economically weak and social subjugated, they have been struggling to survive to see yet another sunrise in their lives. Over the years, owing to the conscious interventions of the governments, social activism and economic impetus, the condition of women has certainly improved, but there is still a long way to go so that social equity can be ensured for the women, especially in the developing countries of the world.

Throughout the history, in every culture and society, women have played a defining role in the growth and development of the human race. They have led societies to reason bigger, move forward and create a better tomorrow for themselves and their progeny and have created examples of ceaseless curiosity, illimitable courage and world-changing ingenuity, they have been subjugated and have been made to be subservient in their roles and responsibilities, to a greater or lesser degree in all parts of the world.

In India, the status bestowed to the women in our society has been no different. As per our scriptures, women always been revered as Mother Goddess and have been worshipped as a symbol of Shakti; Women have been regarded as epitome of kindness, compassion, gentleness, tolerance and humility and are regarded as an icon of spirituality, yet, the social evils such as dowry, freedom of expression, freedom of choice and freedom to live a life they wish, have suppressed their aspirations and most of them, unlike the menfolk, are still leading a dejected life.

With time and conscious social intercessions, the women's roles and prestige have undergone a transformation in the

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last few decades and today, with the rise in education and encouragement to pursue professions, women are realizing their privileges and abilities and breathe the fresh air of freedom. Women in India are now traversing across cultural boundaries and traditions to enter the male-dominated areas to stay ahead of the change curve. Today women have demolished longstanding community beliefs, social tenets and cultural norms, imposed by society and are moving ahead to find their own space and create their own identity. The self-consciousness, thus realized by women has led to their progress and women of today are empowered and are gaining success in each and every field.

The relentless quest by women for socio-economic freedom continues. In recent years women are expressing a need for gender inclusion and are protesting against the traditional social norms. With extension of education and vocational opportunities, women have increasingly become more aware of their rights to freedom and liberty and today they have realized that they deserve equality in all aspects of life in the true sense of the word.

When it comes to balancing each step with men, the twenty-first century has been a new dawn for women. At all junctures important in a woman's life, women empowerment voices are rising at national and global levels, giving women a clear presence today. Women now have the right to vote, run for public offices, participate in governance, vote in parliament and assembly elections, play in sports, and attend education.

Concept of Social Freedom

The concept of social freedom propounded by Ebenezer R. Edgar and featured for the first time in *The Oxford and Cambridge Review*, June 1907 defines social freedom as the essential means to create a clear and distinct sphere of activities that could be pursued by an individual without infringing upon another individual's freedom. Social freedom is thus a precept of crafting a acceptable equilibrium between both personal and societal freedom with each have its own spheres of activity and without infringement in the other's domain. The concept of social freedom, thus, enumerates necessary limits of individual freedom arising out of the conditions of our social life.

Going by the above rationale, social freedom could be understood as the absence of constraints on how an

individual leads one's life. True social freedom thus infers that as long as a person's actions affect only him or her or their families. The saying, 'Your liberty ends where my nose starts' describes the precept aptly, and such a view of social dictum is recognized as one that defines the limits of social freedom aptly.

Social freedom, therefore, is a shift from unreasoned social customs, values and traditions to a rational way of living and symbolizes people's wish to have independence from archaic rules, routines, cultural norms, and obligations and freedom to pursue such tasks that trap them in conventional roles and responsibilities. This is as true for women as it is for men. Daring to dream and mustering courage to actualize their dreams have been long cherished dreams of women all across the world.

Social Freedom and Women

The subject has been much discussed in different forums in recent times. Series of Government initiatives and social reformation for ensuring social freedom of women have led to discernible shifts in women's positions in India in recent times.

A landmark step in this direction has been the impetus given by the by proclaiming 2001 the "Woman Empowerment Year". The change has been incremental but definite and is visible in all walks of life. From being predominantly engaged in manual labour, staying at home and raising the family, they seem to be unshackling themselves and unfettering themselves from the conservative mindset of the male dominated society. Today, from being just the 'drawers of wood and carriers of water' they have occupied enviable positions in the Government, public sector, and corporate sector with equal responsibilities and are delivering excellent results.

As an aftermath of women's emancipation, they've earned a place of prominence in society. Their good work is now showing in all kinds of professions whether in the police department, the court system, on public policy, or in general, and especially in the armed forces. From a position of socio-cultural debility, women have today responded to the call of the times and are contributing to the communities and economies most effectively.

While the National Women's Day fell on March 8th in March each year, the 33% parliamentary quota was

introduced in the Lok Sabha (which has the greater legislative power) on March 9, 2010, in commemoration of the 33 percent of the proclamation of the equality of rights for women in society issued by the Rajya Sabha in 1970. And as they have learned and earned the ability to do their jobs well, women are gradually influencing the socio-cultural environment as well.

Women account for a significant workforce in India. The existing laws, administrative solutions as well as social reforms have been a welcome step in extending social freedom to women but the age-old social mores and outdated psychological make-up still obstruct the mission of social emancipation of women to a great extent.

The spread of gender equality is seen essential for social justice and inclusion. The proponents of such beliefs opine that women should be accorded the same social respect as men and consider them at the same pedestal as the menfolk.

Today, women in India have far greater economic, social, and political opportunities than did in ancient and medieval times. There are now more rights and protections for women than they did before. As women have reached the upper echelons of our society, it is imperative that the route to female liberty is simply working to educate them and keep them mindful of their privileges. Since more powerful people now know they have human dignity and a stronger voice, they partake in civil and political affairs. There is no difference in their motivation or ability to participate in any role. Successful women have already ascended higher than men at all levels of business, government, and other fields, largely as a result of their capacity and hard work.

Today, women are free only because they can set their own priorities and are able to cope with the obstacles that might come in their way. In order to overcome existing prejudices, they are able to diligently and conscientiously strive toward their goals.

The realities of our society, however, reflect a not so brighter side of such reveries. The legacy of patriarchal society norms favoured men more than the women. Other impediments like their gender, conventional societal mores, historical beliefs, and their lack of courage and confidence to stand up against such atrocities have posed much challenge to this tough mission. The status of women in India today is still not much different as it was in the ancient and medieval ages. There are many civil and

political rights of women, many of which had could not be availed by women until recently. Women are still not treated at par with the menfolk and face discrimination, humiliation and oppression most of the time. The freedom of speech, thought and action are still an illusion.

Today, it is a challenge for many women who are doing more than one kind of work as well as holding down another job to adapt to day-to-day challenges. The position of future son-in-law used to be the most of the worry for most girls. The dowry required payment. Breaking up or divorces have no societal or legal repercussions. Women, since they could not work outside the home, had no option but to continue their husband's business. The couple's relationship was founded on her mature adaptations, his appreciation, and, and the idea that he would be an ally in any such changes. Most families were comfortable and happy. women in the middle-class today have greater freedom, anonymity, chances, and access to opportunities and justice. Many obstacles and conditions have been released from their hold on them. For a long time, women have been missing from culture; now they are back in their rightful place.

Review of Literature

Literature is replete with academic research that explores the varied dimensions of social freedom of women and its ramifications. In trying to fathom the depth of the subject, scholars have generally covered different facets of this important issue and tried to understand its ramifications in details. In doing so, the historical perspective of social freedom of women has been traced and its impact studied that has its repercussion in some form or the other in today's context.

As per literature, the term social freedom refers to women's desire to be free from social taboos, conventions, rituals and roles which provide them with lower status in society (Dubey and Bharadwaj, 2017). As per Ghosh SM (2016), social freedom means the respecting the will of women, obtaining freedom from social customs - tradition, dogmas and rituals which leads to lack of financial freedom, political rights, social liberty and independence from bonds of cast, freedom from orthodox thoughts, and participation in decision making.

As per Sharma P (1981), there is a belief that the status of women that the status of women in any society, is a true

index of its cultural, social, religious and spiritual levels and an investigation of their status, has to be traced back to the ancient period of Indian civilization to understand the context. Sanyal S (2014) states that women emerged as a distinct interest group in the 19th century primarily because the bourgeoisie democratic revolutions of 17th and 18th century that excluded women from their concept of equality. This distinction was based on gender. Since then women as a commune had waged struggle for recognition of their rights as a human being and women's performed various roles in the society right from being the breadwinner of her family, family's care taker, mother, wife, daughter and service benefactor to the society. However, even in this condition, they had severe restrictions that prevented them harnessing their potential further.

Sharma opines that the status of women in Vedic age was much better than one would ordinarily expect in latter times. History substantiates that women held a position of equality with men during this period. Women enjoyed much freedom and women took part in public life. However, over a period of time, their status deteriorated and after the invasion of foreign invasions in India by 700 A.D. and consequent perilous times for women, the practice of sati, Pardah system, and prohibition of widow marriage emerged. The percept of the perpetual tutelage of women propounded by Manu became well-accepted. Manu advocated dependence of women and said that women must depend on their father before marriage, husband after marriage, and on their son when their husband was no more.

During the 19th century, Indian social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayaiiand Sarawati and institutions like Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission etc., led to reformation of women's socio-economic status and made efforts to be legal measures and introduce educational programmes to eradicate the evils and ensure social freedom for women. In the times that followed, the social status of women has improved further. According to Jan (2009), women's decision-making capability has increased as their ages have increased. A married woman today has more say in decision-making than before, woman now influence people as a leader, and are engaging themselves in all professions, hitherto the domain of the men folk. According to Kumar, Deo, and Sonam (2011), working women have outperformed non-working women in their demand for social freedom. As per Kanjya and Joshi (2013,

the social differences between married and unmarried women are significantly diminishing. Unlike the under-educated, Sharma (2015) observed, highly trained women expressing a strong desire for social rights. According to Ghosh (2016), working women, in comparison to non-working citizens, have a higher awareness and desire for social rights. Chhatrala (2017) observed that in a study, the single female college students have been found to have stressed for greater social freedom than married girl college students. According to Priti (2017), there is no difference in the major teachers of social freedom, married and unmarried women. It means that they are all accountable in terms of social freedom.

The Study

In view of the fact that women's roles in culture are shifting today, a shift in their conventional roles is urgently needed. It is seen that in India, women have taken up different positions of employment and are financially self-sufficient. Women, despite their high qualifications and consequent financial self-dependence, they are not allowed the right to live as per their own wish. This leads us to think about the socio-economic condition of uneducated women, generally housewives. As the women's roles in today's context are changing, a study was conducted to study the extent to which women are socially independent.

A brief view of the research is as follows:

Aim and Objectives

The study aims to comprehend how job status and qualifications affected women's social rights and thus understand the extent of women's social freedom. Specifically, the study was undertaken with the prime objective of studying the impact of profession and educational qualification among women on social freedom.

Hypotheses

Every research starts with a supposition; it is a belief that is explored scientifically and is to be validated through scientific methods. Such beliefs could be based on subjective opinions/ interpretations/ elucidations and/ or understanding. In the present study, the proposed notion was initiated with a supposition on the basis of extant

evidence as a starting point. The investigation started with the following two hypotheses.

- Working and non-working women will differ significantly in their social freedom.
- There will be significant difference between high and low qualified women in social freedom.

Selection of the Sample

Sample selection is a very important but sometimes underestimated part of a research study. Sampling theory describes two sampling domains: probability and nonprobability. In view of the homogeneity of the target group, the purposive sampling technique was used for data collection in the present study. The study was conducted on 100 women of Dhanbad town. Out of 100 women, 50 were working (25 High and 25 Low Qualified) and 50 were non-working (25 High and 25 Low Qualified). The women who possess below graduate were placed under low qualified category while those who possess post-graduation and above were place under high qualified. From the overall collected data, total 100 data was scrutinized for further analysis.

Variables of the Study

It is observable that quality of outcome is dependent upon different influencing factors – variable. Some of these variables are dependable, while others are independent variables. In the present study also, the domain of research –Social status of women, the following Dependent and Independent variables were taken into consideration.

Dependent Variable - Scores on women Social Freedom

Independent Variable - Working Status (working and non-working) and Educational Qualification (high and low)

Instrument

The Women Social Freedom Scale (2011), created by Bhusan L. I. was used as a reference in this research. Bhushan presented a scale to measure women’s desire for social freedom in the Indian culture. The dimensions of “social freedom” are theorized: freedom from parental control, interference or control of husbands, social customs

as rituals, social taboos and control of girls, marriage bondage, and economic freedom and equality were considered as the variables. The final scale contains 24 items each possessing significant discriminative power. The scale was administered to 180 female Indian college students. Findings indicate that the scale possesses high split-half and test–retest reliabilities and convincing predictive and constant validities.

In this questionnaire, there are 24 predicate that assess Social Freedom, 16 of which are positive and 8 of which are negative. The scale’s 24 elements included the following three facets of social freedom: freedom from parental and husband interference, freedom from social taboos, traditions and practices, and freedom surrounding sex and marriage, economic freedom, and social equality. This is a questionnaire with a 0.2 scale. The specificity of this questionnaire is 0.75. The scale’s reliability is related to the scores compared strongly and dramatically ($r=.436$) with the Eysenck Radicalism Scale scores in Hindi.

Analysis of Data and Result

The data on women social freedom scale was analyzed by applying established statistical techniques - the Means, SDs and t-test to infer the data and find out the significant difference among working and non-working women.

The analysis and the inference thus received is illustrated below in the following table and through subsequent charts.

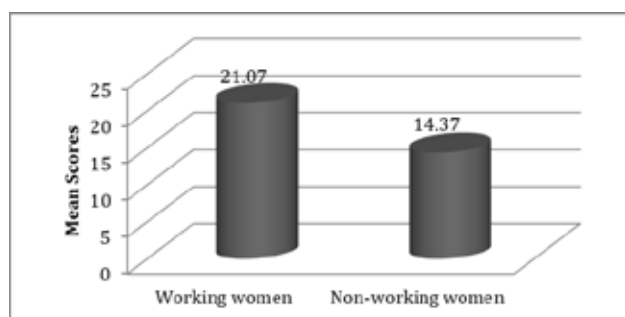
Table 1: Means, SDs and t Value of Working and Non-working Women

W.r.t. Social Freedom

Groups	N	Mean	SDs	t	Level of significance
Working Women	50	21.07	3.88	10.72	0.01
Non-Working Women	50	14.37	2.11		

Figure-1: Mean Score of Working and Non-working Women

W.r.t. Social Freedom



The table above shows that the mean female worker was 21.07, while the female worker was 14.37. The resulting t-value was 10.72; the meaning was considered to be 0.01. It is worth noting here that higher scores suggest higher social freedom for women in line with the score trend. It can be concluded that social liberties were different for working and non-working women. In contrast to non-working women, working women demonstrated a deep appetite for social freedom. Hence the hypothesis “Working and non-working women will differ significantly in their social freedom” was proved. Similar result was found by Ghosh (2016).

The data on women social freedom scale was analyzed by applying the t-test to find out the significant difference among high and low qualified women.

Table 2L Means, SDs and t Value of High and Low Qualified Women in Social Freedom

Groups	N	Mean	SDs	t	Level of significance
High Qualified Women	50	18.21	3.86	10.24	0.01
Low Qualified Women	50	11.87	2.06		

Figure-2: Mean Score of High and Low Qualified Women in Social Freedom

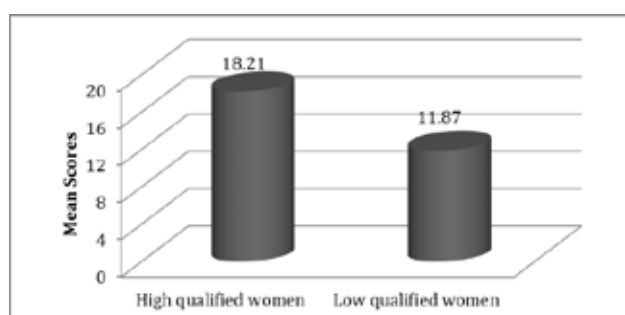


Table 2 indicates a large level of female educated people when contrasted with the low-skilled women who have a high appetite for social freedom. The t-ratio of 0.01 was 10.24, which was significant. Therefore, the hypothesis “There will be significant difference between high and low qualified women in social freedom” was accepted. Sharma (2015) were found similar result.

Main Findings

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the collected data the major finding are drawn out given below-

- Two factors - education and occupation could be directly linked to the degree of social freedom of women. While the former lead to increased awareness, the latter is directly linked to increasing self-confidence that leads to and assertiveness and helps women to define their own life, and for that matter, social freedom
- Working women showed higher desire for social freedom in comparison to non-working women. Such an inference could be attributed to the relatively high degree of social awareness amongst working women, who, in relation to their counterparts are more exposed to the external environment, are more aware of their rights and duties and are more confident as they would have regularly surmounted challenges after they have stepped out of their homes. Yet another factor could be the self-assurance arising out of success gained after actualizing their dreams.
- High qualified women had higher desire for social freedom comparison to low qualified women. Education increases realization and enables people, including women, to know about human rights and privileges and exercise it with assertion.
- Economic independence of working women also could play an important role in enhancing confidence of women leading to increased assertion, particularly social freedom.

Scope for further Research

Social inequality, particularly with respect to women is a growing concern and is a crucial problem facing humankind today. The growth and evolution of societies

in India has been a story of discrimination, ill treatment and denial of equal privileges. Though women have always proved themselves to be equal in all respect, the outdated mindset of our society has worked against providing them the status that they deserve.

The social re-engineering being done in recent times has helped much in creating conditions where women are able to unleash themselves from ossified attitude. The new government regulations have also helped much in protecting women from such archaic mores and have encouraged them to live their lives as per their wish. Social freedom is the yearning to be free from social proscriptions, rituals and traditions that impose undesirable restrictions on women and push them to a lower status in society.

The present study is an exploratory research, however the indications provided in the study provides important cues for further research that may lead us to path-breaking investigation that may enable women to have social freedom. An intensive research could also show them new horizons as far as social equality of women is concerned.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Art and Photography –A Reciprocal Synthesis in Respect of Education in the Pandemic Situation of COVID-19

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Abstract:

Photography has gone through the vicissitude of times to establish itself as an art form throughout the 19th century, but it could not gain proper reputation, except in some special fields such as political movements and social reforms. Photography as a creative discipline had been taken as a staple in art, and it flourished as part of life. To form its own point of view and establish an independent entity, photography had to join secession and photojournalism, and the knowledge of motion photography helped a lot in this regard. At the same time, modern painting had given photography a new challenge as a new art form. In this sense, photography also showed his reactions to the three main icebergs of art: expressionism, abstraction and fantasy. Due to the continuous progress that is taking place around us, modern photography has always been trapped primarily with the realistic approach, but this time it followed a separate form of evolution. For this reason, our field of discussion will be nineteenth-century photography. Initially, the discussion will be about the transaction with photography in terms of the different art schools and their conflicts that have frequently occurred in different streams of art.

Art and Photography are those activities which are undertaken along with academic studies. Typically, Art and Photography are carried out outside the normal classrooms but they supplement academic curriculum and help in learning by doing.

The same tradition can be seen in the practice of photography in educational sectors also especially in the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this area too, photographers are trying to recapitulate the traditional resources of the photographic ethos of the past.

A recognition that arts positively affects our bodies and minds in this COVID-19 pandemic situation. Art and Photography fosters awareness, enhances social skills, increases self-esteem and slows cognitive decline. Many studies have shown that activities such as viewing a painting or photography reduce anxiety and heal trauma. Therefore, the arts and photography are promoters of healthier communities in the intermediate and long term.

Introduction:

Art and photography has always played a stellar role in energizing societies. In time of crisis, impressions reflected by art becomes more central to the lives of people as it helps to lift their wilting spirit and relieves stress and strain occurring from hardships in the environment. The value of art is even more appreciated when one tries to envisage a world without art. During the Renaissance, art was a means upon which ideas were spread and developed. The most notable of which, humanism, altered the mindset of the people and allowed them to explore and appreciate human life and purpose of its existence. The paintings of the Bolsheviks storming the Winter Palace, resurrected a decade later after the occurrence in a cinematic redoing directed by Sergei Eisenstein, to UPI photographs of Fidel Castro's *barbudos* entering a liberated Havana, to more recent iPhone pictures of Libyan fighters during the Arab uprising, and scores of similarly prosaic pictures have echoed the past glory of history. The current pandemic and the COVID-19-related shutdowns have once again given a startling glimpse of a world devoid of in-person art experiences.

It shall not be impertinent to say that Art is fundamental; it is all-encompassing; it soothes when people suffocate and

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provides solace during pressing times. Though at times, art has been viewed only of decorative value, its fundamental persona is all about expression about life and its emotions. Art can set you free. Art can liberate human verve and give succor especially in uncertain and frightening times like has been witnessed during the pandemic that has engulfed the world in the past one year and is again rising its head.

Art and Photography complement each other. While Art has symbolizes the creative side of human growth, photography as a form of art, has writhed considerably in the last two centuries to establish itself as a potent medium of human countenance, and though it could not succeed much to gain the appropriate attention, it could make definite strides in some special areas such as political movements and social reforms. Photography, taken as a staple in art, grew slowly to form its own independent entity through **secession** and **photojournalism and in the process**, photography firmly exhibited its reactions to the three main icebergs of art: **expressionism, abstraction** and **fantasy**.

A brief overview of some famous artists and their paintings need special mention in this context. Some used photography in their paintings to recreate momentous occasions and energize people to surmount odds, while others adopted other forms like cartoons to depict the reality of their time, sensitize them about it and propelling them to respond to it sufficiently.

Two famous painters Roy Lichtenstein (born 1923) and Andy Warhol (born 1930) deserve special mention in this context,. Both used photography in their paintings to describe occurrences of their times and increase their awareness about it. Both began to choose a wide range of images of the most obvious visual aspects of American popular culture and thus changed the direction of American paintings. Though, both had taken the works of major European artists such as Monet, Van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso and Mondrian fervently and created a new way of expressionism, both artists introduced an **anti-expressionist** background to express themselves through their work.

In 1960, Lichtenstein began to work from comics after completely leaving his previous works based on the abstract expressionist style. In 1961, Lichtenstein became interested in **cartoon elements**, which started with a copy of the cartoon images. From 1961 to 1965, Lichtenstein made paintings that were extracted from advertising images and ordinary things, among them the images of

cartoons were more complicated. Subsequently, he made an indirect satirical movement molded into the process of abstract expressionism and improved upon **satirical epigrams**, when he painted oversized paintings with his lavish and puristic prose-work techniques.

For Andy Warhol, it was only the subject which was the main means to indicate his thoughts by the use of a large number of photographic images in his works. By early 1960s, cameras and all related professions had developed as a powerful artistic achievement. Since the 1930s, it was discovered that photography used photographic images in the works of artists as a source of artistic elements. But after 1960s, photographs were emerged as main elements in creating an image on canvas and tried to connect to the realities of the times. Warhol took his themes from the classic features of mass communications, such as newspaper comics and advertisements, and produced visually smooth, calm, and dispassionate paintings that stirred people.

From the post-1960 period, David Hockney emerged strongly as one of the most honourable painters. In 1968, critic Charles Harrison described his recent painting on canvas “Rocky Mountains and Tired Indians” to criticize a Hockney’s exhibition. Harrison consolidated Hockney’s Art, the cohabitation of the power of the imagination over credibility, disciplines, originality, the power of invention, bursting and interpellation and sincere reality.

Surrealism in Photography:

In the mid-1950s, fantasy was slowly but strongly demonstrated on both sides of the Atlantic. Photographers used special lenses and filters to manipulate to impute the final visual effect, sometimes those were not exactly the same as the real ones, as a result it had gone beyond our known world. Since almost 1970, although they had mainly used printing techniques and, consequently, faster and more appropriate results continued to be obtained.

Bill Brandt (1904-1983), famous for his pioneering work in photographic manipulation worked throughout his life to capture photographs at the right moment of human psychoanalysis to create an impression in the mind of the masses. As a surrealist, Brandt deeply searched for visual reality in a theme full of mysterious themes and described them all with the help of delicate manipulation. His works,

influenced by imposed effects used in cinematographic image, could be identified by themes related to literature and even themes related to dramaturgy.

American resident Jerry Uelsmann (born 1934) debuted as a recent leader of this fantasy movement was influenced by both the photographs regarding Oskar Rejlander's "multiple negative" and Stieglitz's "equivalent". Uelsmann had inadvertently expressed something to reserve archetypal images from the deepest part of the deep subconscious.

Contemporary photographers often turned to fantasy to portray their expressions on autobiographies. In Joanne Leonard's work (born 1940) "Romanticism is Ultimately Fatal, from Dreams and Nightmares" (1982, selectively opaque positive transparency with collage) indicates meaning from both sides of images and nomenclature which refers to something related to your personal life.

David Wojnarowicz's (1954-1992) photograph titled "Death in the Cornfield" (1990. Silver print) creates intense bewilderment and sudden mental shock on a much higher level. Wojnarowicz was worth a unique power of innate talent with strange imaginations, which can be seen in his harmonized works.

Fantasy in Photography:

The medium that is generally considered spontaneously neutral and real, for that medium, photography created a combination of exuberant works from the fantasy world. Although a wide range of imaginations are also considered to form the world of emotions, photography itself is part of the visual objects of reality as individual processes. A painter can boldly narrate architecture also in the sky, he can also describe a creature from the outside world, or he can also despise a terrifying scene inside the tomb. Because a painting could come from the real world, just as it can easily come from mental insight. But since photography should have started from some of the realities placed in front of the lens that is why it is very poor for photography to be successfully achieved when entering the world of the imagination.

Recently, Sandy Skoglund (born 1946), who created detailed scenes to take her photographs, tried to combine humor and fantasy photography. In 1981, he had taken the photograph "Radioactive Cats", where he had shown a bunch of green cat-like creatures, those that glow in a terribly demarcated green room.

It can be said that the importance of "Fantasy" in photography began with his search by Hippolyte Bayard (1801-1887). Bayard created a photograph in 1840 where it had been shown as the body of a dead man and that it was an unprecedented protest against the French Government's negligence towards his discovery. But this image was another type of exception. In fact, only after the introduction of "combined printing" did the photographers of the next decade begin to create the fantasy images. One of the great students of combined printing was Oscar G. Rejlander, who was one of the first in the ranking of those who used double exposure by force to obtain an expressive effect in their photographs. Rejlander had shown through "Hard Times" (1960) an unemployed carpenter next to his wife and son with taciturn, those who looked like ghostly idols by dint of double exposure, so it seemed from the carpenter's centre question of anxiety or maybe it was a prognosis of their deaths. Almost a decade later, he had shown another tricky fantasy photograph titled "OGR The Artist Presents OGR - The Volunteer", where through the use of combined prints he has shown the painter Rejlander dressed in a long coat beckoning a second Rejlander dressed in a tough military uniform.

These types of photographs acquired their importance very rarely in the 19th century and, in general, these types of photographs were taken simply as "Trick Photography". To most viewers, he showed the same kind of reactions to these kinds of spirit photographs in the 1880s, and these photographs gained exceptional popularity. Double exposures were used to provide dramatic images to show friends and family that they were no longer in this world; although, most everyday photographers and art photographers were much less interested in those imaginary photographs.

It can be said, although, in the 1920s, fantasy became a great photographic strategy when surrealist painters and photographers were discovering to open the way to the power of unconsciousness and imagination. Apparently, although it seems contradictory, according to surrealists like Man Ray, Hans Bellmer and Brassai, the surrealists were attracted by the reputation of photographic reality. The apparent faithful reality of the images created by photography brought a tender atmosphere to even the most beautiful images: it could be created by the special effect of the camera or made inside the dark room. The tide of those luscious surrealist images spread not only

to art photographs working on the fantasy path, but also had a major impact in the field of fashion photography and photography with respect to advertisements.

It attracted many photographers whose images gave the impression of an essence of the most lunar condition. In the 1930s and 1940s, Clarence John Laughlin, who gained general fame for his photographs of gruesome abandoned buildings and Louisiana cemeteries, began to express models and masks abstractly in his photographs and with the help of double exposure. He tried to make the coexistence of reality and imagination.

In the 1960s, Ralph Eugene Meatyard (1925 - 1972), who was a resident of the city called Kentucky and was a master of photographic science and a weekend photographer, earned his enormous reputation for the same type of photography in the one that had shown children and other human figures with ghostly masks inside an abandoned and desolate room.

In those same years, Duane Michaels (born 1932), in his famous sequence of photos, logically tried to express the broken visual fragments of dreams, and also, in his innovative use of 'Photography within Photography', he threw these images into the Puzzle definitive. In Duane Michaels's photography you can also see the reflection of the same ideas that could be observed in Warhol's art: the arrangement of the series, the narrative approach and somewhat narcissistic. Michaels got those kinds of features from Madison Avenue where he worked as a commercial photographer and this Madison Avenue was even the source of thinking about the Warhol theme. Michaels believed that within the flow of time a single image claims a little more than can be fulfilled by the fragments of another second image. Reveal or symbolize the reality behind the viewer's perception in Michaels "Photo-stories" or in a short drama.

A much more personal impact could be seen in Edmund Teske's works. He organized the photographs of his family and friends into several photographs, which turned his daily incidents into a world of fables.

With them the brilliant products were added and they were done with the airbrushes, which embellished the pages of the Adult magazines like them with the variety of levels of fantasy photographs, photographs that amused many Photographers with great individualism. In the 1950s, Bill Brandt used wide-angle lenses and high-contrast

printing, for whom he expressed heavenly and supernatural images in an empty cave like chamber of a palace. In his "Plastic Love Dreams" photo series (1968), Roger Merten took pictures with the help of plastic and other reflective materials both indoors and outdoors.

Japanese photographer Eikoh Hosoe created a striking photographic composition in his book "Killed by Roses" (1963) to show the complex, emotional and passionate mindset of the poet Yukio Mishima.

In recent years, the sense of humour became the main part of fantasy photography, because young photographers realized that some special aspects of life can be entered with the help of humour. William Wegman made his contribution to some special type of photo series, where he had shown his own pet dog in a variety of comic roles, had given the dog's name as Man Ray. Sometimes he had shown the dog the Man Ray cape of an elephant or a bat. Wegman uses these fantasy photographs primarily to indicate social problems through humour.

A recognition that the arts positively affect our bodies and minds in this COVID-19 pandemic situation has been amply witnessed in the past one year. Art and Photography fosters awareness, enhances social skills, increases self-esteem and slows cognitive decline. Though different forms – paintings, cartoons, creative impressions and other modes, it has been able to reduce anxiety and heal trauma to a significant extent. Therefore, the arts and photography are promoters of healthier communities in the intermediate and long term.

A brief preview of the use of photography in their paintings by some famous artists can underline the influence of art and photography on human mind, especially in times of stress, as in this case –the pandemic.

Art and Photography in Respect of Education:

It is said that "The arts are a critical component of healthcare. Expressive art is a tool to explore, develop and practice creativity as a means to wellness." There is an increasing amount of scientific evidence that proves that art enhances brain function. It has an impact on brain wave patterns and emotions, the nervous system, and can actually raise serotonin levels. Art can change a person's outlook and the way they experience the world.

Decades of research have provided more than a sufficient amount of data to prove that arts education impacts everything from overall academic achievement to social and emotional development and so much more. Research has also established that arts develop neural systems that produce a broad spectrum of benefits ranging from fine motor skills to creativity and improved emotional balance. Quite simply, the arts are invaluable to our proper functioning individually and as a society.

Evidence from brain research is only one of many reasons education and engagement in fine arts is beneficial to the educational process. As Eric Jensen, one of the leading translators in the world of neuroscience into education, states in his book *Arts with the Brain in Mind*, “The systems they nourish, which include our integrated sensory, attentional, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities, are, in fact, the driving forces behind all other learning.” This notion of how the arts and the brain work together is supported by another study, conducted by Judith Burton, professor of Art Education and Research, Teachers College, Columbia University, which reveals that subjects such as mathematics, science, and language require complex cognitive and creative capacities that are “typical of arts learning.”

Art Changes Consciousness. It is observed that when someone observes a profound piece of art one is potentially firing the same neurons as the artist did when they created it thus making new neural pathways and stimulating a state of inspiration. This sense of being drawn into a painting is called “embodied cognition”. In an experiment to see what happens in the brain when you look at beautiful paintings, the experiment concluded that when one looks at art whether it is a landscape, a still life, an abstract or a portrait – there is strong activity in that part of the brain related to pleasure. The participants underwent brain scans while being presented a series of 30 paintings by renowned artists. When viewing the art they considered most beautiful, their blood flow increased in a certain part of the brain by as much as 10 percent, which is the equivalent to gazing at a loved one. Paintings such as those by artists Constable, Ingres, and Monet produce the most powerful ‘pleasure’ response.

Psychologist Dr. Dacher Keltner of California University in Berkeley, said: “That awe, wonder and beauty promote healthier levels of cytokines suggests the things we do to experience these emotions – a walk in nature, losing oneself in music, beholding art – has a direct influence upon health

and life expectancy.” The experience of viewing awe-inspiring art has a positive effect on the physical body and mental state. The University of Wisconsin psychologist Shilagh Mirgain also stated, “Awe has many important implications for our well-being.” Mirgain explained, “Experiencing awe can give us a sense of hope and provide a feeling of fulfillment.” Several medical related articles also provide evidence that points to the physical benefits derived from experiencing awe-inspiring moments on a routine basis. A recent study from the University of California-Berkeley found that “participants who experienced more awe-struck moments had the lowest levels of interleukin-6, a marker of inflammation.”

Art Reduces Stress. The U.S. National Institute of Health states “Engagement with creative activities has the potential to contribute toward reducing stress and depression and can serve as a vehicle for alleviating the burden of chronic disease.” They also stated, “Through creativity and imagination, we find our identity and our reservoir of healing. The more we understand the relationship between creative expression and healing, the more we will discover the healing power of the arts. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) reports that “The time is ripe for bringing together artists, scientists, and educators to collaboratively confront the question of how creativity functions in the brain.

Art & Photography in Covid Times

In a difficult period that spanned over a year now, has been fraught with tremendous psychological pummeling amongst the young ones. Isolated due to the pandemic, many of them are down with monotony, dreariness, boredom, stress leading to terrible depression and despair. Art and photography has been found to provide a synthesis to such emotional trauma and have encouraged students to find an artistic expression and identify, in this crowded world of images helping them to have an optimistic vision which move towards new understandings about ourselves and the world around us.

In such time of crisis and isolation, the role of art becomes more central to our lives. As we head into a period when learning gaps loom larger than ever, ignoring arts could be equivalent to scrapping an instructional strategy that both engages students and helps them to achieve. In today’s times of despondency, Arts can spur our neurons to

connect ideas and revitalize ourselves. Through Arts and Photography we can discover amazing new ways to create in ways that promote critical thinking.

- Visual artists are recreating masterworks with found objects at home and using coffee grounds to study shading.
- Music teachers are using video conferencing to guide students to tune and repair their own instruments.
- Theater and dance students are creating choreography inspired by the current situation and studying how to express themselves with the new limitations of their virtual “stage.”
- Students are using sketchbook journaling to chronicle their experiences.
- 1st graders in Seattle are being sent to the Getty Museum website to write haikus that describe a masterwork.
- Teachers are offering alternatives to quizzes and allowing students to demonstrate knowledge through song, drawings, spoken word, podcasts, and other creative means.

It all talks about of ingenuity under compression, and is incredibly exciting to imagine how all of this innovation might catapult our educational system toward a more creative future. Art and Photography are those activities which are undertaken along with academic studies. Typically, Art and Photography are carried out outside the normal classrooms but they supplement academic curriculum and help in learning by doing. These activities help students to develop skills of Problem-Solving, Reasoning, Critical and Creative Thinking, and Communication.

In times of complete isolation, Art and Photography hones collaborative abilities, facilitates Emotional and Social skill development and facilitates overall growth of positive disposition.

These concepts emphasize that in the 21st Century, education and learning must surpass the four walls of a classroom. **The core aim of education and learning should be to foster holistic development.** The importance of Art and Photography cannot be overlooked in fostering “holistic development”. Holistic development essentially means intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development which can be achieved only through proper education. Education plays a fundamental role in holistic development. Art and Photography help in the holistic development of students and assist in developing critical skills and

abilities to be successful and happy in the 21st Century life and workplaces. Therefore, the importance of Art and Photography is immense during college education.

13 essential skills and values that one can develop through Art and Photography:

When theoretical curriculum and Art and Photography are integrated together, then our chance of learning more and exploring more about your strengths, interests, and abilities becomes higher. Therein lies the importance of Art and Photography activities which are supplementary to the theoretical curriculum.

It is true that much of your intellectual development happens, to a great extent, in the classroom itself. But, various other aspects of your personality such as emotional development and social skill development happen through Art and Photography to a large extent. The key role and importance of Art and Photography cannot be denied in holistic development.

The 13 essential skills and values that can be developed through **Art and Photography** are:

- 1. Logical and analytical thinking** – analyzing reasons behind events and situations
- 2. Critical thinking** – examining concepts, ideas, problems, and issues
- 3. Creative thinking** – thinking of newer ways to solve problems; visualization; thinking of new ideas
- 4. Problem-solving skills** – solving problems utilizing various concepts, solutions, etc.
- 5. Leadership skills** – taking initiatives and responsibilities; influencing others in working for a good purpose; setting goals; motivating others to work towards goals; taking accountability
- 6. Social skills** – collaboration; teamwork; building good relationships with others
- 7. Emotional skills** – understanding your strengths and weaknesses; controlling your emotions; empathy for others
- 8. Communication skill** – the power of expression; listening to others; public speaking
- 9. Technology skills** – using various computer software and apps for getting things done

10.Social values – respecting differences among individuals; respecting others values and culture

11.Ethical values – maintaining ethics in public life; good moral values

12.Recreational values – understanding the importance of leisure and recreation; participating in leisure and recreational activities

13.Enhance Professional Capacities – to Enhance Professional Capacities (EPC) of Scholars / to be Teachers.

Role of Art and Photography in the Educational Sector has a highly constructive role to play the Pandemic Situation of COVID-19. The corona virus disease (COVID-19) epidemic has caused an unprecedented crisis across the board. In the field of education, this emergency has largely stopped face-to-face activities of educational institutions in more than 190 countries to prevent the spread of the virus and reduce its impact.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has argued that even before the outbreak of the epidemic, the social situation in the region was deteriorating due to rising rates of poverty and extreme poverty, persistence of inequalities and rising social dissatisfaction. In this context, the crisis will have a profound negative impact on various social sectors, particularly health and education, as well as employment and poverty. In the meantime, **UNESCO** has identified significant gaps in educational outcomes, related to the unequal distribution of teachers in general, and to the best-qualified teachers in particular, in low-income countries and regions and rural areas, where indigenous people and migrant populations are concentrated.

In the **educational sector**, many measures that countries in the region have adopted in response to the crisis are related to the suspension of face-to-face classes at all levels, which have given rise to three main lines of action: a wide variety of formats and formats Deploy. (With or without the use of technology) methods of distance education; Support and mobilize educational personnel and communities; and concern for the general health and well-being of students.

The purpose of this document is to shed light on the various outcomes that these measures will have on educational communities in the short and medium term, and will present key recommendations to best manage these outcomes,

drawing attention to learning opportunities and innovation in the epidemic education system.

The role of photography is also very present in this COVID-19 situation also in the education sector. In this pandemic situation, photographers also showed their talent to increase the contribution of photography, just as photographers of the past contributed their talents in surrealism and fantasy photography.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

A Glorious Synergy - Manipuri Dance, Tagore and Uday Shankar

By Bimbavati Devi *

Abstract

Manipuri dance has traversed a long-staggered path from the temple to the modern stage to its present form - and the process is going on. The credit for the growth and evolution of this great performing art form goes to many great exponents, proponents, and dancers whose efforts have made Manipuri dance keep pace with the modern sensibilities. The voyage of Manipuri dance to secular places from the religious ones started with the efforts of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Uday Shankar, the pathfinder of modern dance in India. Tagore was impressed by the soft and lyrical movements of Manipuri rasleela and used them to give a visual expression to his melodies. On the other hand Uday Shankar wanted his disciples to learn the classical dance forms of India from which he can be motivated to create a rich gamut of movements and a unique style of dance which would be pan-Indian by nature. They both had invited exponents of Manipuri dance at their respective institutes of cultural practices and artistic endeavours to impart training to their disciples and group members.

Key words – modern dance, movements, exponents, religious, training, melodies, pan-Indian

Rabindranath Tagore and Uday Shankar: Their Contribution in bringing Manipuri dance to the world stage

Dr. Manjusri Chaki Sircar, the renowned dance exponent and scholar who pioneered ‘Navanritya’ – a style of dance which was the fruit of her deep research work, scholarship, and rigorous training of various dance forms, remarked, “It

is surprising how in a period of classical dance revivalism, Tagore felt the need for modern tools to express his poetic mind.” Tagore wanted to give a visual expression to his songs through a body language that would not impair its flow. In short, we can say that he preferred a melody of movements. Tagore was spellbound by the sinuosity of Manipuri dance and so he invited teachers from Tripura and other neighbouring places to impart training in Manipuri dance at Santiniketan, his center of artistic study in West Bengal. This was the beginning of the journey of Manipuri dance from the traditional environment to a wider audience outside Manipur. After his demise, several Manipuri teachers served as faculty members at Santiniketan, and gradually Manipuri dance became well known in Calcutta, then Ahmedabad and in other parts of India.

The great stalwart, the architect of modern dance in India, Uday Shankar too had contributed vastly in modernizing Manipuri dance in his era. He had set up the Uday Shankar India Culture Centre in the hills of Almora to create, build and spread a pan-Indian language of dance. He also had an intense craving to know more about the rich repertoire of the various Indian classical dance styles. Therein by 1939 he had invited gurus of various dance forms to impart training to his disciples. Not all dancers had gained the stature of classical dance during the pre-independence era. Guru Meisnam Amubi Singh was the Guru of Manipuri dance at the centre. Uday Shankar’s dance centric film Kalpana was about a young dancer’s dream of building a holistic academy of dance at the foothills of the Himalaya happened in 1948. In this a regional dance form like Manipuri was given a dignified status. Portions of Manipuri Rasleela were choreographed for the film. They were beautifully presented by Amala Shankar under the able guidance of the Manipuri mentor at the centre, Guru Amubi. Rasleela, in

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all its splendor, was a visual treat for the audience. It stirred the first fresh vestige of contemporaneity to an otherwise a time-honored temple tradition. Gradually from the time of Uday Shankar, the need to present Manipuri dance to the world outside Manipur became intense. When there was an urge among Manipuri dancers to present Manipuri dance for a wider audience outside their land, the need to remodel, recreate and rejuvenate the dance form was felt.

It was a time when the nation was struggling to establish its own identity, when dances were viewed from the angle of a creator trying to create a new lexis and system of dance which had emanated the flavour of the soil, intensely connected to the Indian art and simultaneously had an universal appeal. Thus, movements aesthetically were borrowed, adjusted, modified, changed and the result was prodigious.

Uday Shankar's dance institute at Almora had closed down by 1944 due to paucity of funds and administrative problems especially during the outbreak of the 2nd World War. The Uday Shankar India Culture Centre was established in Kolkata in 1965 and stalwarts like Guru Tarun Kumar and Guru Devjani Chaliha were appointed as the Manipuri dance gurus at the Centre.

When the dances were brought out from their traditional religious precincts to secular spaces, the dancers had to strike a balance between the richness of the tradition and contemporary receptivity.

The Spectrum of Art

Art is self-motivating by nature. A tradition is always to be examined from the perspective of the potentiality that it has got and concurrently that which can be unearthed and developed. Contemporary Manipuri dance is to be examined in the context of a cultural identity and an exploration of the roots. Contact with the world outside Manipur has given the dance form a new verve and facet. The basic dissimilarity lies in the fact that there is a nucleus of spiritual belief in the traditional spaces whereas on the stage the presentation assumes a worldly form portraying at its best two apparently opposing states of being - the secular and the sacrosanct. This stage presentation illustrates the cultural image of Manipur, which is praiseworthy as it makes Manipuri culture accessible and understandable by all.

Productions Based on the Narratives by Rabindranath Tagore

Choreographies based on the creations of Tagore triggered off in Santiniketan, where he encouraged young dancers to derive inspiration and ingredients from the various classical and folk traditions of India as well as Sri Lanka and the South East Asian Countries. To Tagore it was essential for the form and the content to complement each other. Tagore urged to have a visual interpretation of his melodies and poetry. Initially dance was used just as an adornment to his music but later he stressed on the training of dance. Hence, gurus of the various classical dance styles like Manipuri and Kathakali were brought to impart proper training to the pupils in Santiniketan. According to Dr. Manjusri Chaki Sircar, "During Tagore's lifetime, the list of teachers at Sangeet Bhavan, who worked from three months to three years or more at a stretch, included three in Kathakali, eight in Manipuri, one in Mohini Attam, and one in Javanese style. Along these styles, Garba from Gujarat, Bengal's Baul and Hungarian and Russian folk dances were also absorbed." 5

The introduction of Manipuri dance in Santiniketan on one hand helped in fortifying the style that later was widely known as Rabindrik or Rabindra Nritya and on the other hand the gurus who worked there and unconsciously or consciously used their experiences and revelation to enrich Manipuri dance back in their native soil. This school of dance known as Rabindrik or the Tagorean style of dance evolved gradually and dances based on his melodies and poetry became inconceivable without the use of Manipuri probably because of its non-intimidating tenderness; for example, the portrayal of the character of Shyama was through the delicate movements of Manipuri dance. I agree with veteran Manipuri dancer Devjani Chaliha when she said, "The tiny little sapling that Tagore planted in his dance dramas has grown into a tree, but a tree totally different, devoid of its natural delicacy. Its flowers adapted a fragrance very different from the original one. In Tagore's dance dramas, Manipuri Nritya Abhinaya attained a marked prominence, but they were not exactly the copy of Manipuri, but were composed on the inspiration of Manipuri. As a result we see diluted form of Manipuri in the Tagore dance dramas." Very disappointingly this is the image of Manipuri dance to a large number of people.

Dance based on the dramas written by Tagore have been tried out in various ways with diverse illuminations by different generations of Manipuri dancers. Some of the most common ones are Bhanushingher Padavali, Chitrangada, Shyama, Mayar Khela and Chandalika.

Some of the choreographies based on Tagore's compositions which will be discussed are those by the following veteran and young exponents:

i) Prof. Jatindra Singh

The person who needs special mention for his immeasurable contribution in giving a multifaceted expression to Rabindrik is Prof. Jatindra Singh, the Manipuri dance exponent at Viswa Bharati University in Santiniketan. Prof. Jatindra Singh, popularly known as 'Jitenda' arrived in Santiniketan around the end of 1965 when a veteran by the name of Arambam Amubi Singh who was better known as 'Masterji' imparted training in Manipuri dance. Here he was introduced into a whole new world of Rabindra Sangeet and rendering of Tagore's creations through dance. There was a lot of disparity between the lessons and the style between his mentor back in Manipur, Maisnam Amubi Singh and the present Manipuri dance trainer in Santiniketan. The latter's style was characterized by stiff movements and he justified this by saying that the students who come to learn in Santiniketan are from various backgrounds and the natural softness of movements that is inherited by the Manipuris do not come spontaneously to them and as a result his training method had to be altered for the convenience of the learners. Since 1968 Jitenda started choreographing group dances of dance dramas in which he was guided ably by Shantideb Ghosh. Around this time, he also for the first time played the role of Bajrasen in the dance drama Shyama. The most interesting part of this presentation was that his dances were choreographed in Manipuri style and Bharatnatyam and Kathakali were used to compose the dances of Shyama. This was a very enlightening experience for him. He started realizing that the thematic content, dramas, music and poetry of Tagore entailed introspection of all that was there in Manipuri. He utilized the footwork, spins, jumps, sitting postures, poses of the traditional dances like Bhangi Parengs, which were not much excavated as they mostly lied latent inside veneer of rituals. He tried to accurately permute and combine these movements. The most vital lesson that he

learnt from masterji was that when the lower half of the body trailed the patterns of the vigorous stances of Thangta and the complex footwork of cholom, the upper half of the body concentrated on the jagoi (Manipuri dance) aspect especially the hand gestures of *Chali* (a traditional ritualistic dance) and *Lai Haraoba* (festival revolving around the ancient religion of Manipur that entails complex rituals, dance and music). He also learnt to dovetail them with the movements of other dances when required.

Jitenda always emphasized more on the *bhava* of Gurudev's songs and tried to improvise a body language to match the flow and the mood of the music rather than just reproducing a mere physical interpretation of these. But however, when he had to compose a dance on a difficult rhythmic pattern or an intricate metrical cycle (*tala*), he felt the urge to modify and use the intricate works that were there in the various forms present in the Manipuri dance tradition. He further adds that he had heard from stalwarts like Shantideb Ghosh that Tagore favored sublime and suggestive abhinaya. He was told that an effective visual rendition of Gurudev's melodies and poems should be through the proper use of the regulated and restrained abhinaya that they had seen in Manipuri rasleelas.

While giving a shape to the various group dances of Tagore's dance dramas he tried to reasonably use some of the ritualistic and folk dances of Manipur. For example in Chandalika the group of villagers dancing to the beat of '*mati toder dak diyechhe ayere chole aye*' join hands and perform *Thabal Chongba* as this being a communal dance (performed in *Lai Haraoba* festival and *Yaosang* i.e. Holi) helped in illustrating an image of contentment, abundance and unity that was depicted in the song.

He recalls his experience of choreographing Chitrangada, in which he drew inspiration from the Manipuri traditional elements. The '*bols*' of *Choutal* and *Teental Macha* were effectively used to demonstrate Chitrangada's hunting spree and heighten the climax. In this scene he also tried to revise the costumes by deviating from the long-established pattern of cladding the princess and her companions in *ghagras* and sarees. He clothed them in the traditional Meitei *khamenchatpa* (a typical Manipuri dhoti worn usually by the members of the royal family) and *koyet* (Manipuri turban). This was indeed a very novel approach, which however was not heartily accepted by the orthodox exponents of Santiniketan.

ii) Guru Kalavati Devi

Guru Kalavati Devi is one of the pioneers of such pursuits who worked on dance dramas of Tagore like *Bhanushingher Padavali*, *Chitrangada*, *Kal Mrigaya* and *Tasher Desh*. According to many dancers, *Bhanushingher Padavali*, the Passion play between Radha and Krishna, which has been intricately woven, can be best conceived in Manipuri style as the lyrics are inspired by the *Padavali* literature of the *Vaishnavas*. While choreographing this dance drama she was motivated to use some of the traditional dances like *Krishna Abhisar* danced to the accompaniment of a traditional song sung in Manipuri *rasleelas* and the choreographic patterns of *rasleela* like the *Mandali*. She had also clad the Krishna in the traditional Manipuri *Natavar Vesh*. *Phaneks* or the traditional Manipuri wrap-around worn by women differed from the traditional striped *phaneks*. They were made of silken fabrics in solid colours with bright and ornamented borders. The stage-craft also were like the traditional *ras mandaps* of Manipur.

Chitrangada was also more or less designed in the same pattern with slight variations. The dances of the villagers incorporated a lot of movements from *dhol cholom* (traditional drum dance performed during Holi in the temple courtyards in Manipur). Traditional Manipuri *koyets* were used for the male characters like *Arjun* and *Madan*.

In *Kalmrigaya*, Guru Kalavati Devi skillfully made use of the elementary steps of Manipuri dance. These were used in depicting the scene of the Ashramites of *andhamuni* (the blind sage). The lessons imparted by him were repeated and practiced by the young pupils. These basic steps devised by Guru Bipin Singh for the new entrants in the field of Manipuri dance help in building the dexterity of the body and familiarity with the hand and feet movements that are used in *Chali*, *Bhangis* and the other traditional dances. In her choreography, the dancers of the hunters profusely used the steps of *ta khousaba* and *leiteng thang* (steps of Thang-ta, the martial art of Manipur).

However, till date the most outstanding work in the field of Tagore dance dramas in Manipuri style is *Tasher Desh* choreographed by her. This dance drama portrays and rebukes the strict and irrational strictures of a stagnant societal structure. It is believed that Tagore had dedicated this work to Subhash Chandra Bose, the blazing young rebel. In fact, choreographing *Tasher Desh* was like a

challenge to her. She utilized her knowledge of the vast repertoire of Manipuri dance techniques like classical and folk dances, especially Manipuri *cholom tandav* in her compositions. The free flowing, wave like movements and the fluid lines of Manipuri dance were used to portray the spontaneous human feelings. Strikingly opposite to this, these movements were also modified to give a rigid look and she broke the torso movement of Manipuri dance that resembles figure eight into small fractions in order to match with the stiffness of the cards that represented age old social bondages and crumbling frame of mind. The costuming of the king and the queen was also inspired by the dress worn by male and female dancers in the *Thougal Jagoi* in *Lai Haraoba*.

Guru Kalavati Devi regretfully says that Tagore was not permitted by the British Government to visit Manipur during the period between 1919 and 1921 due to the turbulent political situation in the country for example the Jalianwala Bagh Massacre and the Non-Co-operation Movement. She feels that the majestic, intricate and at the same time vigorous movements of Manipuri *cholom* executed and developed by extremely accomplished exponents like Guru Thangjam Chaoba, Guru Ibohal Singh, Guru Dhaja Singh would have turned Tagore astir. She says that the gait of the animals and birds (*gaja gati* – gait of an elephant, *kak gati* – gait of a crow, *bak gati* – gait of a crane) which are so typical of the *choloms* definitely would have motivated him into encompassing these into the Tagorean dance form rather than just remaining content with the *jagoi* aspect of Manipuri *rasleelas*.

Many dancers have drawn inspiration from Tagore's creations and have tried to redefine his dance dramas from different perspectives as well. When they are dealing with these dramas, they try to bring in their own personal creative idiom, sieving his aesthetic vision and the inner meaning from the conventional pattern of the dance drama with its vast array of sequential songs and dances. These dancers emphasize on the emotive quality of his lyrics, the literature and the central thought around which Tagore weaved the plot.

iii) Dr. Sruti Bandopadhyay and Preeti Patel

A commendable attempt was made in 1992 by Preeti Patel and Dr. Sruti Bandopadhyay under the aegis of

Lavanya who choreographed Chitra, which was an adaptation of Tagore's noted dance drama and ballad, *Chitrangada*. Preeti Patel played the role of Kurupa and Sruti Bandopadhyay played the role of Surupa. It was an intellectual rendition of this drama articulating the deep significance of womanhood and freshly delineating the relationship between a man and a woman. In here, besides classical dance, they intelligently employed vast collection of Manipuri performing arts especially the pre-Vaishnavite forms like Thang-ta, the dances, music and symbols used in Lai Haraoba to compose the vigorous hunting scenes and the romantic duets. Preeti Patel says that at that time the movements and stances of Thang-ta especially those of ta (spear) which were used to depict the valour of the warrior princess were very simple as it was not easy to condition their bodies to accept a totally new art form at a mature age. The companions of Chitrangada were portrayed by professional Thang-ta artistes from Manipur who in one sequence frenziedly ran off with the inaphi (Manipuri veil) covering her, with one prick of the spear removed the inaphi from her body to depict her inner metamorphosis, the realization and revelation of the woman in her. The sequence where Madan, the God of love is beckoned and beseeched for changing her unfeminine presence, the Pena music to create the supernatural ambience was presented and this was even more effective because Madan was never on the stage the way it is conventionally done. Madan being Ananga (the one without a body) the duo meaningfully kept him invisible. Pena is an indigenous string instrument of Manipur played during the dances and songs of Lai Haraoba.

iv) Preeti Patel

Later Preeti Patel reworked on this dance drama on her own in 1997 or '98. While doing this she changed the choreography considerably.⁸ She was told by a scholar of Tagore studies of Santiniketan that when Tagore had conceived Chitrangada, both the roles of Kurupa and Surupa were played by one dancer. Patel while choreographing Chitrangada had played the roles of Kurupa and Surupa herself. In this she incorporated new techniques and patterns drawing more inspiration from the dances, music and rituals of Lai Haraoba. The varied formations of *Paphal* (Manipuri Snake God that signifies the endless process of creation) were used. It was a difficult task as just any formation could

not be used because its implication had to be coherent. The dances of the *maibis* (Manipuri priestesses) were used while depicting the process of metamorphosis of Chitrangada. She also used a simpler version of the *Lairen Mathek* (the path trailed by the Paphal). For a viewer who was not acquainted with the significance of Paphal, it was something intriguing. Madan being a God, she portrayed him as a spirit and just the voice and the music played by penakhongbas (Pena singers) on the stage in the traditional garb created the supernatural ambience. Preeti Patel says that these changes evolved with her becoming more mature as a dancer and most importantly as a person.

v) Poushali Chatterjee

Kolkata based danseuse and a follower of the discipline of Guru Bipin Singh, Poushali Chatterjee's production, *'Ichhe – Sei to Bhangche, Sei to Gorche'* was a modern rendition of Tagore's short story *'Suoranir Sadh'*. It reflects the temperament of the modern society that indulged in over consumption and unnecessary lavishness. Through the simple tale of a small prince the choreographer tries to depict how human beings crave for more inspite having the best material possessions. She says, "It is a primeval urge to possess what others have and just as it affects people who are poorer, it also affects those who apparently have everything that love and money can buy."⁹ The modern way of life which is always wrapped up in discontentment is portrayed by her through the various aspects of Manipuri dance and the songs of Tagore along with recitations from the original story.

vi) My work

My first experimental work was Matrika which was a choreographic interpretation based on the compositions of Rabindranath Tagore, Shri Aurobindo and Rishi Bankim Chandra. It was an impassioned invocation of the motherland and *Matri Shakti* who is hailed for her supreme power and praised for her elegance and beauty. Matrika the golden womb embodies vidya or learning, gyan or knowledge, Kamala or beauty and Durga or divine omnipotence and power. She is karuna, ever kind and forgiving; she is the protector to her children. Matrika ended with a prayer to bestow in us the strength to rise and attain the glory befitting her. In this I employed the movements of Manipuri classical and folk dance and Thang-ta.

In 2009, I choreographed a ballet motivated by Tagore's essay, 'Vishwa Parichay' that led me to the world of Rabindranath's Universe. The eternal brilliance of this endless universe, the star-studded resplendent beauty of our solar system and amidst these, the existence of Man, who through his intellectual emotion, transcends his insubstantial physical existence and merges with the Absolute. This was the essence of my production, which I had named 'Amitajyoti' meaning the undying splendour. I paid my humble tribute to the Creator and his Creation through my form. The main theme of the ballet was inspired by a song of Tagore, '*Mahabishwe, mahakaashe, mahakala majhe, ami manaba, ekaki bhrami, bishhaye bhrami, bishhaye*' (in this vast universe, under this infinite firmament, through time unbounded, I am roving in utter bewilderment).

In the first scene I started with the creation of the universe, the stars and satellites, their infinite light which still remains an impenetrable mystery. For a portrayal of the intangible, I employed moves of Thang-ta and physical exercises related to the same. Besides these, some yogic postures translated into dance were also blended in the choreography.

The brilliance and the vitality of the sun were shown through various postures of yoga, especially *surya namaskar*. While depicting the uniqueness of the astral world, I combined an ensemble of movements stimulated by those of jagoi, pung cholom (traditional Manipuri drum dance) and Thang-ta.

After this, the focus was on Earth who provides us with life and energy and lovingly she embraces us. The elegance of Mother Earth was demonstrated through the soft lasya movements of Manipuri dance using delicate green and blue inaphis (traditional Manipuri veil) that depicted the verdurous planet with its grand water bodies. I had also used projections of the blue planet on the cyclorama in this scene.

The ballet ended with a tribute to Nataraj as according to the Hindu philosophy, it is the energy emanated from his ceaseless dance that keeps the universe moving. In this I used the well heard lyrics, 'tumi achho Bishwanatha, ashima rahasya majhe, nirabe, ekaki, apana mahimanilaye'

(Vishwanath, I can feel your presence amidst this elusive endlessness. You dwell in the midst of your tranquil glory).

The production besides Tagore's songs used a lot of Sanskrit (both Vedic and Classical) shlokas. A fine blend of western symphony and Indian ragas were used.

While dealing with the Tagore's dance dramas, different dancers have used different forms to interpret a multitude of thoughts. Not many Manipuri dancers have experimented with his narratives due to many understandable reasons. Some feel that it is too Bengali to fit into the Manipuri vocabulary and according to many the language is a bar as the depth of his poetry and its intricacy need a good knowledge of the language.

Whatever maybe the mode of explanation and interpretation of the ideas of Tagore, whether they pertain and adhere to the usual conventions or they reach out for means that are far beyond the traditional realm, they have always formed a very strong foundation on which the dancers of different generations and genres have built their thoughts and very importantly their artistic careers. According to many practitioners of dance and music, Rabindranath Tagore himself is an industry personified whose resources have given the true calling to countless number of artistes hailing from diverse fields.

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READERS' FORUM**Role of Education During COVID and Post COVID Period****Prof. (Dr.) Abhijit Kumar Pal *****Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made a drastic change in various sectors like- industry, education, tourism, health, business etc. These changes are found throughout the world. The notable effects are found in the field of Education. Actually the traditional teaching learning process has become thwarted due to COVID-19 pandemic. Even in post COVID period a significant change is found in the teaching learning, evaluation and admission process. As a result of it, students and teachers become adapted with new processes like- online class, online evaluation, webinar, online workshop, online Faculty Development Programme (FDP), online Orientation Programme (OP) etc. At the same time students, teachers, educational administrators etc. become accustomed with the new situation and they are trying to perform accordingly. Similarly the role of Education has become changed during COVID and post COVID period.

Key Words – COVID-19, Pandemic, Traditional, online class, Webinar, Online evaluation, online FDP, online OP.

Introduction

At present, the most important as well as discussed topic in the world is the effect of COVID-19 and the problems at post COVID period. In 2019, it emerged as a viral disease in China. Then on 11th. March, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new type of Corona Virus, SARS-COV-2 that causes COVID-19 respiratory disease, a global pandemic. From March, 2020 to till date, COVID-19 has become a world threat to normal activities as well as human existence. Moreover it created a massive change in the field of Education

particularly in teaching, learning, evaluation, admission system etc. In India, during and after COVID-19, the scenario in education sector has been changed. Though the politicians, educationists, educational administrators, economists, scientists, physicians etc. are trying their best and suggesting various measures to cope up the problems caused by COVID-19.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to get an idea about the aims of Education during and after COVID period and to understand the effects on syllabi of various subjects during and after COVID period. The study also aims to realize the changes in methods of teaching in COVID and post COVID period and to know how the students are acquainting with the different changed processes of learning in COVID and post COVID period. As an important facet of research, the study explores nuances of the changed evaluation process and its effect in COVID and post COVID period and get an idea about the changed role of teachers in COVID and post COVID period.

The study also wishes to understand the teacher-student relationship during COVID and post COVID period and realize the actual role of Governments (Central and State Govt.) in educational administration in COVID and post COVID period.

Significance of the Study

The study assumes greater significance as after going through this article, the students, teachers, educational administrators etc. shall be able to achieve the important implications. It is imperative the traditional aims of Education have been changed and new aims of Education

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are emerged. In some cases in different stages of Education like-Madhyamick (Secondary), Higher Secondary (HS), and Under Graduate (UG). Post Graduate (PG) etc. the burden of syllabi is either shortened or truncated.

Today, the traditional method of teaching i.e. offline/face to face mode/classroom method is replaced by online method of teaching with the help of ICT. The students become acquainted with various processes of learning. Also, the students and teachers are now able to cope up with the changed evaluation process. Students become familiar with the changed role of teachers and the teachers are also enjoying their new roles in Education. Besides, teacher student relationship becomes more effective, cordial, cooperative and sympathetic than before. The Central and state Governments have accordingly, taken proper role in managing educational institutions during and after COVID period.

Objective wise findings of the Study

The objective wise findings of the study are point to specific issues that need consideration. Some of the important facets in this respect are as follows.

Aims of Education — There should be some differences in aims of Education between the normal stage and COVID as well as post COVID stage. Actually in COVID and post COVID period, the main aim of Education must be the comprehensive development of personality to become a civilized citizen in a flexible way. For this purpose the rules & regulations may be flexible in nature.

Effects on Syllabi – During and after COVID period, some changes are found on effects on syllabi of various subjects like – the load of syllabi have been curtailed or in some cases the syllabi become truncated. It is found that this changes in syllabi have been done due to non-functioning of normal teaching learning process in schools, colleges universities and other educational institutions.

Methods of Teaching – Due to pandemic COVID situation and closure of educational institutions, some new methods of teaching were emerged like- i) online teaching with the help of various apps like – Google meet, Jitsi meet, WebEx meet, Zoom, Google Classroom, AWW App (A Web Whiteboard App), Ted Talks, Light Sail, Remind, Pear Deck, Actively Learn, Padlet, Thing link, Edpuzzle, Quizizz, Talking Points etc. Teachers must also look for

newer medium of teaching that could include teaching with the help of Whatsapp, YouTube and messenger/voice mail/video etc.

Teaching with the help of **Students' acquaintance with various methods of learning** – It is clear that during and after COVID period the students become more acquaint with the various changed as well as modern ICT-based learning process than the teachers. As a result, the students frequently take the help of various Google apps like – Google Apps for Education(GAFE), Easy Bib – A bibliographic management tool, Doctoplus – used for scaffolding, organizing, managing & evaluating students' project, Haiku Learning, Engrade Pro, Super Quiz, Pear Deck, Blockly Games, Pencil Code Gym, Made with Code, Mit App Inventor etc.

Evaluation Process – A drastic change is found in the evaluation process also. It is known to all that both the teachers and the students are influenced by this changed evaluation process. Instead of traditional offline evaluation process, various online evaluation processes are widely used like – Socrative, Google forms, Mentimeter, Polleveryone, Kahoot-game-based assessment tool, Answer Garden, Chatzy, Flipgrid, Quizlet, Remind, Survey Planet, Typeform, Voice Thread, Sparkpost, Zoho Survey etc.

Role of Teachers – It is witnessed that in the COVID and post COVID period, the roles of teachers have gone through significant metamorphosis and have assumed newer responsibilities to suit the needs of the times. To adapt to the changed perspective of education today, it is necessary for teachers to have some ideas on online teaching. They must also have adequate skills to handle various ICT gadgets, considered essential for conducting classes through online medium.

Teachers are expected to know how to create Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for taking online classes and must have capabilities to effectively manage and coordinate Whatsapp (WA) groups. Heavy dependence on electronic medium also necessitates teachers to know the utilities of Infilibnet, Shodhganga, School Guru etc. which provide an ocean of knowledge to the readers and could be an excellent repertoire of knowledge for students as well.

In addition to the above, teachers should have a fair knowledge of Google scholar and mode of using it for scholarly pursuits. They must also have awareness about the

generally used software like Turnitin, Urkund, PlagScan, Plag Tracker, Plagiarisma, Dupli Checker, Copyleaks etc.. Above all, teachers must have sympathy, flexibility, and helping attitude during and after online classes.

Teacher-student relationship – During and after COVID period, the teacher-student relationship have become more flexible, sympathetic, cooperative and adjustive so that the both incumbents can understand their own advantages and limitations to make teaching learning more effective.

Role of Governments (Central & State) – We know that the Governments (both Central and State Government) took a positive role in the field of Education. Actually the Central Government used to take the major decisions like opening & closing of educational institutions, online teaching learning, online evaluation, online admission etc. Side by side all the state governments in India used to follow these decisions. By this process, India became an example in the world how to cope up with the COVID and post COVID period.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the role of Education in COVID and post COVID period has changed a lot. The students, teachers, educational administrators, the Governments

must face some problems at the beginning of lockdown but due to passage of time, all the stakeholders become adapted with the changed situation in the field of Education. Hope in future the whole world will be able to remove the problems created by COVID-19 and a new horizon will be emerged in the sector of Education.

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READERS' FORUM

Spiritual Evolution of the Self and Society: Indian Insights**Prof. (Dr.) Sanjoy Mukherjee ***

Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-prophet of India and perhaps the most powerful and eloquent spiritual ambassador of India in the West, had offered us one of the most insightful yet practical interpretations of God or Spirituality. Speaking in the West, he had said:

“Ancient religion says that a man who does not believe in God is an atheist. Modern religion proclaims that a man who does not believe in his own *self* is an atheist.” (Emphasis added)

The foundation of wisdom of this volcanic monk can be traced to the messages of the Upanishads, the vast body of ancient Indian spiritual literature that had always sung the glory of the Self. The presiding deity in The Bhagavadgita, the celebrated Indian classical text that has crystallized wisdom of the entire Upanishads, is not the Blessed Lord but the Self in its full and resplendent glory. The Lord acted only as the inspirational force and power that would help Arjuna, his disciple and the protagonist of the epic Mahabharata to rise beyond the pettiness as well as the shackles of the lower self and discover the Higher Self in its full and resplendent glory. The locus of this pristine superordinate identity, the Higher Self is lodged right at the centre of our hearts. “Ishwara sarvabhutanang hriddeshe Arjunastishthati” (The Supreme Being is anchored deep in the heart centre of all creations, O Arjuna!). This also resonates with the inspirational dictum from The Bible: “The Kingdom of Heaven is within.”

What is the essence of spirituality or spiritual pursuit? The Latin word ‘*Spiritus*’ connotes breath. Breath is the most fundamental and universal rhythm in our system that keeps us alive. We cease to live when we cease to breathe. Thus, spirituality is the life-breath of any individual, organization, society, system and planet at large. It keeps any system vibrant, dynamic and ever flowing and enable us have the flavor of every moment of our existence. When the flow of our breath is in a rhythm of harmony we feel the dynamic balance in our life and enjoy the drama of existence in its fullness and depth. When the harmony goes out of balance and the consciousness of breath is lost our

life, individual as well as collective, sinks into the abyss of dullness, monotony and oblivion. A sense of lack of purpose and direction then keeps us haunting until we find our anchorage in the Kingdom of Heaven within us.

Spirituality is not merely an end point or a destination. It is the entire journey that is vibrant with living spiritual pursuit. Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel Laureate sage poet from India put it very succinctly in verse with his matchless literary mastery:

“My pilgrimage is not at the end of my road/ my temples are all there on both sides of my pathway.” (Translation mine)

Where does this pilgrimage or journey begin? It begins with the individual self. Each one of us has a certain notion of our own self. It is created by our perception of the body, the sense organs, the mind and the intellect. Usually, our experience of the self is limited within the body-mind frame and we are often unaware of the fire in our heart and the flame of the spirit. The spirit is always soaring and pining for expression through expansion. This is the expansion of our consciousness that begins from our body but slowly reaches out to everything around us and finally unites with the world and universe at large. The spiritual journey begins to take off when we cross the limits of the body and start reaching out to the others by way of expansion of our consciousness. The process of evolution of consciousness can be likened to the expanding of a sphere along concentric spheres with increasing diameters. It progressively covers and includes the family, the organization, the society, the nation and finally the planet and the whole cosmos. When it is limited to the domain of the body and the objects of proximate concern, then the human being is called selfish, that is, concerned merely with his physical or material self and the immediate surroundings. The more it accommodates the others in its fold, the more its own petty concerns pale into insignificance. Finally, when the whole universe is engulfed in this process of evolution of consciousness the others find in him a completely unselfish

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person. According to the insights of the illumined spiritual master Shrimat Saumyendranath Brahmachary, the former Acharya of Dev Sangha, at this stage the evolved soul only radiates Unconditional Love to one and all without any discrimination or expectation of any reciprocation.

Upon reaching such a stage Swami Vivekananda had exhorted:

“Never forget the glory of human nature. We are the greatest gods that ever were or ever will be. Christs and Buddhas are just waves in this boundless ocean which I AM!”

What is the implication of this spiritual journey for the society?

Firstly, it makes the society a vibrant and throbbing entity that is always in the path of evolution. Like breath, it brings to the society fresh air and new light so that it can come out of the stagnant dragging force of the dead habits and fossilized ideas and thoughts of the past while retaining its effulgent glory. It opens up new avenues of experimenting with our innate creative energy and find out novel and pragmatic ways of resolving our pressing problems that apparently had created an impasse in our personal and social spaces of development. To use a current phrase, it shows us multiple ways of how to ‘think out of the box’. Spirituality is not to be confused with religious sectarianism, bigotry and fundamentalism that fiercely champions the cause of ‘the only one way’. Spirituality in essence embraces different pathways of liberating the self so that we may reach the zone of enlightenment. Enlightenment is not a sudden flash of light from the above. An old poem will make it clear.

“Before enlightenment, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers,

During enlightenment, mountains are no more mountains and rivers are no more rivers;

After enlightenment, mountains are once again mountains and rivers are once again rivers.”

Then what has changed? It is the way we look at the world and ourselves too.

Secondly, another important aspect of our spiritual culture is encouraging the art of questioning and dialogue. One may recall the golden words of Socrates: “An unexamined life is not worth living.” Such examination begins with asking the deeper questions that may often be uneasy. It may be mentioned here that all the Upanishads have been composed in a mode of conversation between Teacher-Student or Master-Disciple. Profound subjects on philosophy and life in general have been raised here through questions from the Student Seeker and the answers

are offered by the Master. The text of the Bhagavadgita is all throughout a conversation between the disciple Arjuna and his Master, the Blessed Lord (Sri Bhagavan) Himself. The conversations as mentioned above are logically structured and systematically evolving taking the seeker gradually up along the progressively unfolding layers of consciousness to the final rendezvous. When the societal consciousness also evolves in a similar fashion, with increasing clarity and depth, the dead woods are cleared and it moves ahead towards becoming an enlightened society.

Thirdly, with the human consciousness growing beyond the small self and then flowing into the others, the constricted notions of consumption, self-aggrandizement, mindless competition gradually give way to concern for others, welfare of the many and an individual as well as collective quest for something higher and deeper in life and world beyond our narrow limitations of a life that is closed and tight.

Fourthly, at a macro level, with our growing connectivity with the planet and the cosmos in heart and spirit, there is a natural flowering of ecological sensitivity within us. This is qualitatively different from the number crunching exercises that experts often engage in for generating environmental awareness. This is more a matter of feeling from the heart as one is in communion with Nature at this level of ecological consciousness. It is like Martin Heidegger getting agonized that the river Rhine was getting hurt when the turbine blades were hitting the waters.

And finally, with the evolution of spiritual consciousness, the interaction with the world and our relationships with others becomes like a sport that we begin to play as we are increasingly becoming aware that the other is essentially identical to us at the core but there is difference, rather diversity in outer forms like body, mind, intellect, senses and so on. This reduces the chances of violence and strife and can create a climate of peace and amity through mutual understanding and cooperation. Above all, like a game, we all begin to enjoy the drama of life while playing all the while with ‘myself only’ in essence but apparently with ‘the others’ as if like a child!

Sri Aurobindo, probably the most profound seer-philosopher of modern India, had given us the most beautiful and vivid depiction of God:

“What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden!”

[This is a revised version of an article of mine published earlier in ‘Swarajya’ under a different title]

ARTICLE DIGEST

Analyzing the Impact of COVID-19 on Education Professionals - Toward a Paradigm Shift: ICT and Neuro-education as a Binomial of Action

**Luis Espino-Díaz, Gemma Fernandez-Caminero,
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The current context under the threat of the pandemic as a result of COVID-19 is causing a series of transformations in the different spheres of socio – political and economic life. Different governments have launched emergency policy initiatives based on the suspension of classes and the closure of educational centers to continue teaching activities from homes telematically through the use of information and communication technologies to be able to stop the number of infections.

This article focuses on the consequences of the pandemic in the field of education. Specifically, in the paradigm shift that is assuming the transfer from face-to-face teaching to online teaching and how education professionals must face adaptation to the new global context through the online modality, a movement that has occurred and is occurring in a frantic and abrupt way.

Consequently, education professionals are carrying out a process of assimilation toward new circumstances with a few difficulties, causing situations of high levels of stress. A survey of more than 10,000 teachers revealed that 92.8% of teachers suffered emotional exhaustion, stress, anguish, or anxiety due to confinement and distance education. Excessive bureaucratic tasks, unclear instructions, lack of support in teleworking, and lack of technical means were also the problems pointed out by teachers. Possible difficulties facing such policies include poor online teaching infrastructure, lack of teacher training, information gap, and complex home environment. To address the specific problem of teacher training, this analysis suggests teacher training through a series of training guidelines.

This analysis was based on the significant deficit in digital competence and knowledge of the use of ICT by education professionals. This question becomes a crucial issue in the current context. Different empirical studies have reported the improved knowledge of teachers' digital competence. In this sense, there are studies that report an alarming difference between the competencies that teachers should have to develop digital competence in their students and the ones they truly have. This study confirms the existence of an important gap in the teacher training in the use of ICT and its application in the classroom.

Other studies have revealed that teachers carry out continuous training throughout the academic year and demonstrate skills in certain areas of digital teaching competence such as security and communication, although there is still a deficit in the creation of digital content. Another factor to consider is the teacher's self-perception of the need for training in the use of new technologies. On this matter, a previous study reported that 50.0% perceived a medium need and 37.0% a high need. A recent analysis on digital competence in future teachers that proposes a model for the development of teacher digital competence based on the sociocultural approach revealed a medium level of development of digital competence and concluded that there was still much to do in terms of teacher training in ICT, being necessary to provide strategies for the development of this skill in their students.

The new educational landscape requires taking a series of measures, including assessing training needs of education professionals to facilitate the assimilation of the current

context in which online teaching and the use of ICTs stands out. There is thus a need to assess the training needs of education professionals with respect to the use of ICT, and to optimize the use of ICTs through the contributions made by neurosciences, and more specifically from neuro-education.

It is important to know neuro-education as a scientific discipline. Neuro-education is a discipline that promotes integration between educational sciences and neurology, where educators and neuroscientists develop disciplines such as psychology, neuroscience, education, and cognitive science enabling teachers to have not only a solid training in their field of knowledge, but also basic knowledge in neuroscience to produce improvement in teaching methods and in different educational programs.

It is thus imperative that an analysis is done for educational centers in the present context, specifically, closure of educational centers and, as a consequence, the change from face-to-face teaching to online teaching through ICT. Subsequently, different measures related to the necessary training of education professionals in this new context also need to be analyzed. The consequent inferences would lead to the contributions made by neuro-education as a means of optimizing and channeling the teaching and learning process in this new context.

Analysis of the current educational context caused by COVID-19, by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and World Health Organization (WHO) pointed to the consequences of psychological effects, social isolation, difficulties in accessing nutrition, and lack of physical exercise for children in confinement. It was stated that a number of factors seriously affected the children due to the closure of educational centers. This included disruption of learning, poor training of parents for distance learning due to low educational level of the parents, unequal access to information and communication technologies, lack of childcare, economic consequences and increased unemployment and reduction of wages and damages in productivity of the region. After prolonged closure of schools, the possibility of the dropping out of students who do not return after the closure order completed increased. Other international reports were positioned along the same line.

In addition to all these elements, the pandemic has revealed a series of consequences that must be taken into account at the educational management level. A recent report

highlighted several problems facing the educational system. The pandemic has forced the immediate transfer of teaching to the online modality without time to carry out authentic planning and a modification of the curriculum design to adapt it to the online modality, which has led to “remote teaching of emergency”. It has been observed that teachers and administrators must take into account that students may not be able to attend online training immediately, resulting in an untimely delivery of assignments. For this reason, flexibility with deadlines for assignments within courses, course policies, and institutional policies should be considered.

Faced with such exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic, schools have closed their doors in 185 countries and government administrations have ordered the transition to the tele-training of students. It has manifested the need to train teaching staff in the use of different technological tools, in order to adapt the different elements of the curriculum to the new context of a pandemic. We are facing a change in the educational paradigm in which online training through ICT has ceased to be an option in the teaching methodology and has become a necessity in these times of pandemic in order to continue with the student learning process.

The sudden metamorphosis of teaching activity from the face-to-face model to the online modality reveals the existence of three gaps: the access gap (having or not having access to connection and technological devices); the use gap (time of use and its quality); and the gap in teacher skills, availability of resources, and adaptation of online platforms to support teaching). This digital gap makes the distances between families with more and less resources ever greater, as is occurring during the period of confinement.

Technologies and, particularly the Internet, have influenced the way of learning, working, and socializing by modifying the concept of distance and time in access to information. This reality has required the development of new personal, social, and professional skills. In this sense, transforming information into knowledge requires reasoning skills to organize information, relate it, analyze it, synthesize it, and make inferences and deductions of different levels of complexity. Studies have revealed that experiences and methodological conceptions of teachers in collaborative learning with MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses)

in the curricular area of Social Sciences is deficient. The results demonstrate the educational need to transfer and integrate, in an operational and functional way, the progress and generalization of Information and Communication Technologies in teacher training curricula. Specifically, the research reported low or very low values in the teaching staff in relation to the knowledge of the technological resources along the line of other investigations.

On the other hand, several investigations have pointed to a series of factors that are present when teachers face the inclusion of the technologies and apply them in their teaching work. These are the high motivation that teachers present for increasing their competence in the use of technologies a perception of poor knowledge in the use of technologies, lack of training activities, and the perception of teachers that their competence is greater in tools denominated as traditional as in the management of the technologies.

On the other hand, teaching staff, as a teaching worker, must also adapt their work methodology, which implies carrying out a training process that serves as a guide to assimilate the context caused by the coronavirus crisis. In this sense, it is necessary to approach teacher training in the use of ICT in two lines of work: firstly, the acquisition of different levels of competence of teachers in ICT and, on the other hand, the improvement in a series of pedagogical, social, ethical, legal, technical, and school and school management.

It is proposed that different levels of training that teachers can achieve to hone their competence of the use of ICT. These are: basic, referring to those competencies that are necessary for the performance to be developed; advanced, referring to the competences necessary for a work with greater autonomy and creativity; and specific, referring to the level of competence required for the performance of specific teaching positions and that requires mastering specific applications.

Optimization of the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is important under the Focus of the Contributions of Neuro-education. It is stated that Neurosciences are developing investigations focused on the neural bases of learning, memory, emotions, and different functions of the brain, the results of which have high applicability in the field of learning. This is because the foundation of neuro-education is a concept called brain

plasticity, which is the brain's ability to physically change to adapt to stimuli and habits in ways that are useful to the individual. In this sense, learning and emotion are very close.

Thus, in meaningful learning, relevant information is linked with sensations and feelings linked to pleasure that make us internalize them earlier. In this way, neuro-education emphasizes the need to use an emotional approach both in classrooms and in any educational context. According to studies, neuro-education is a new discipline that relies on the contributions of neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and education sciences to create a better understanding of how a human being is capable of learning and how this information can be applied to create teaching methods as well as plan more effective study and educational policies. Neuro-education deals with the study of the different stimuli that the student perceives in the teaching-learning process, through the senses, to give rise to meaningful learning. The integration of ICT and the contributions of neuro neuro-education education, neuroscience, and educational neuro-technology help the student to build their own learning strategies through new paradigms that facilitate learning processes in the context of online teaching. This is because the significant learning processes are based on brain operations, the results of which change the circuits of the brain. This interdisciplinary approach between ICT and neuro-education facilitates meaningful learning by creating interactive learning spaces in which the presentation of content through the innovative possibilities offered by ICT in online teaching offers teacher-student interactivity that arouses the interest of the students. This situation causes the connection between neurons or the neurotransmission process, that is, the transmission of information from one neuron to another neuron, to obtain effective results when explaining the new content.

In the previous bibliography, experiences could be found that were focused on the symbiosis of neuro-education and the application of ICT. This was the case of the use of augmented reality as a recreational pedagogical tool to optimize significant learning processes based on stimulation linked to emotions and sensory stimulation. This tool produces a series of chemical substances that stimulate the act of learning. This research concluded that the use of augmented reality stimulated the senses, increasing the levels of attention in students. Likewise, it was reported that this technological tool improved the transmission of

information in an interactive and playful way. With this, the students enriched their learning experiences based on emotional empathy.

Along the same lines, there is research aimed at interconnecting the disciplines of education–ICT–neuroscience through learning games. These authors developed a design-based research approach to the development of learning technology supported by neuroscience. Specifically, the study proposal allowed teachers to carry out teaching using a game-based approach and its neuro-scientific implications. For these authors, the brain's reward system is based on the fact that the brain is motivated through stimuli such as winning points in a game. This activity involves the absorption of the neurotransmitter called dopamine in the midbrain regions and this would imply greater motivation for the activity in question. This reward system has provided a new understanding of the educational potential of learning games and the cognitive and neural processes underlying the neural process. To do this, a multidisciplinary team designed a computer application that took into account neuro educational theory that explains the behavior of the human brain when faced with stimuli such as play, the teachers' knowledge based on practical experiences in the classroom, and the design and use of ICT. Therefore, the conclusions derived from this study were assumed. It is proposed to include learning activities based on games through the use of ICT and that responds to the information provided by the neurosciences such as the brain stimulation due to these types of activities aimed at meaningful learning.

In relation to the learning environment and motivation of students, a study on the use of phenomenology in the Student Learning Perspective (SLP), affirmed that students' perceptions of the learning environment, in light of their motivations and expectations, determine how situational factors influence approaches to learning outcomes. This approach provides not only a contextualized interpretation of learning phenomena, but also offers relevant information for the development of a teaching strategy that can improve the learning experience of students.

Along this line, it was also observed that there were no systemic reference models that consider environmental variables in online learning and offers an integrated model to evaluate the contribution of different variables in predicting the performance of distance learning students. In the model proposed by the author, variables such as

perception of the physical learning environment, perception of course design, and personal variables are established as predictors of student performance.

Regarding the high motivation of teachers to increase their competence in the use of technologies, a study revealed that academic satisfaction had a direct effect on confidence in the process of transition to the professional field and is a predictor of the professional identity of preparation for professional transitions. Consequently, for these authors, increasing motivation influences the development of knowledge and skills.

It is also inferred that use of ICT also involves constructivist-based learning since its use gives students control over their own learning through self-regulatory mechanisms that are set in motion under precise stimulation. When significant learning is carried out through various brain operations, modifications occur at the level of the brain circuits. In this way, neuro education provides the necessary tools for the student to optimize the brain's potential more effectively.

Despite the fact that ICTs are constantly being updated, most of the traditional platforms are oriented to content, content administration, and the application of teacher-centered methodologies. Therefore, a review of online learning is necessary that is capable of combining technological advances and the principles of neuro-education focused on students, which can stimulate motivational processes toward meaningful learning.

To summarize, it is evident that the pandemic is leaving devastating consequences in society from a social, health, political, educational, and labor point of view. In the educational field, a paradigm shift is going on that goes beyond the merely methodological. The fact that different educational administrations have had to carry out a transfer of the educational system from face-to-face teaching to online teaching at a speed of real urgency is causing the use of ICT to have gone from being one more methodological resource to a necessary solution so that the teaching and learning process is not interrupted, thus avoiding the collapse of educational systems worldwide. This has been an educational, but also a health measure since the closure of schools and the adoption of online education would help stop the spread of the pandemic.

For this reason, the transformations that are taking place are affecting the teaching profession itself, while

education professionals must adapt to the new situation. The teacher's role in the effective use of ICT tools in the teaching-learning process is thus essential. For this, teachers must have training that leads to them assimilating the pedagogical uses of ICT. In this way, the generation of new learning styles would be facilitated. On the other hand, for the learning to be more effective, there is a need to lean on the discipline of neuro-education through the management of emotions and at the same time, optimize the academic performance of students and work of teaching professionals. In this way, knowledge of the brain would provide essential information that can facilitate meaningful learning through emotions. In fact, research has shown the activation of cerebral regions of the right hemisphere such as the lingual gyrus, the posterior hippocampal gyrus, the anterior hippocampal gyrus, and the fusiform gyrus when faced with positive emotional stimuli; these are areas whose neuro-circuits are involved in the facilitation of memory processes. This directly impacts the need of the educational system to generate climates that promote respect and positive emotions, in order to facilitate learning processes.

Along the line of other authors, a series of measures were assumed that must precede the proposal presented such as the provision of material resources (especially

technological devices) and human resources as well as the reformulation of the elements of curricula including evaluation processes.

Faced with this pandemic situation, online teaching is thus becoming a solution in order to continue with the development of academic curricula. Also, this type of teaching modality has its own advantages as well as disadvantages. Regarding the advantages, flexibility of schedules and spaces stands out, but collaborative work with participation and interaction through different forums and other tools require greater discipline and a high degree of individualized follow-up by the teacher. The disadvantages include the socialization factor can be highlighted due to the lack of social interaction with classmates and teachers, lack of technological knowledge necessary to face this type of teaching, quality of technological means and tools, and a higher performance and dedication of time in students with the continuous delivery of activities. The mechanism of clarifying doubts and correction of works to control the learning process of the students is also lagging. These are measures that fall not only on political leaders or teachers and school leaders, but also on families themselves. This shows that, like the fight against COVID-19, this is a shared responsibility.

ARTICLE DIGEST**A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning****Sumitra Pokhrel and Roshan Chhetri**

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The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting almost all countries and territories and its global impact has led the world to take responsive care. Lockdown, closure of commercial activities and staying home strategies were enforced as immediate measures to flatten the curve and control the transmission of the disease.

The impact is far reaching and has affected learning seriously. With schools, colleges and universities discontinuing face-to-face teaching, there is a pressing need to innovate and implement alternative educational and assessment strategies. Introduction of digital learning is one such innovative initiative.

Considering that there are weakness of online teaching infrastructure, limited exposure of teachers to online teaching, information gap, non-conducive environment for learning at home, equity and academic excellence, it is time to reassess the challenges and opportunities of online and continuing education during the COVID-19 pandemic and find innovative ways to combat the same.

Pedagogy for Continuing Education through Online

Lockdown and social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to closures of educational institutions in most countries, which in has propelled a shift to delivery of education through online platforms. Though adoption of such virtual medium of instruction has helped much during this global pandemic, it has also posed challenges to both educators and the learners and it was an entirely new experience for learners and the educators and both teachers and students were not prepared for not prepared for it.

The issues with respect to E-learning tools were difficult to handle for many. Learners with fixed mindset often struggled to adapt and adjust, whereas the learners with a growth mindset quickly adapt to a new learning environment. The variety of subjects needing different approaches to online learning was another challenge for teachers. Also, many students have undergone psychological and emotional distress and have been unable to engage productively.

Then there have been issues related to the expertise of teachers and exposure to use suitable and relevant pedagogy for online education. Some of the online platforms used so far include unified communication and collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Canvas and Blackboard allow the teachers to create educational courses, training and skill development programmes. It took some time for teachers and students to adapt to newer methods like flipped classroom and virtual classroom platforms like videoconferencing (Google Hangouts Meet, Zoom, Slack, Cisco, WebEx) and customizable cloud-based learning management platforms such as Elias, Moodle, and Skype.

Some other challenges identified and highlighted by many researchers relate to accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, life-long learning and educational policy. Many countries have substantial issues with a reliable Internet connection and access to digital devices. While, in many developing countries, the economically backward children are unable to afford online learning devices, the online education poses a risk of exposure to increased screen time for the learner. Therefore, it has become essential for students to engage in offline activities and self-exploratory learning. Lack of parental guidance, especially for young learners, is another challenge, as both parents are working. There are practical issues around physical workspaces conducive to different ways of learning.

The innately motivated learners are relatively unaffected in their learning as they need minimum supervision and guidance, while vulnerable group consisting of students who are weak in learning face difficulties. Some academically competent learners from economically disadvantaged background are unable to access and afford online learning.

The level of academic performance of the students is likely to drop for the classes held for both year-end examination and internal examination due to reduced contact hour for learners and lack of consultation with teachers when facing difficulties in learning/understanding.

Student assessments are carried out online, with a lot of trial and error and confusion amongst teachers, students and parents. The approach adopted to conduct online examination varies as per the convenience and expertise among the educators and the compatibility of the learners. Appropriate measures to check plagiarism is yet to be put in place in many academic institutions. The lockdown of schools and colleges has also affected internal assessments and examinations.

There are economic, social and psychological repercussions on the life of students also. Many of these students have now taken online classes, spending additional time on virtual platforms, which have left children vulnerable to online exploitation. Increased and unstructured time spent on online learning has exposed children to potentially harmful and violent content as well as greater risk of cyber-bullying. School closures and strict containment measures mean more families have been relying on technology and digital solutions to keep children engaged in learning, entertained and connected to the outside world, but not all children have the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to keep themselves safe online.

Majority of learners from rural villages have parents who are mostly illiterate farmers. Students are engaged in assisting parents in farm activities such as agriculture, tending to cattle and household chores. Some students even requested to postpone exam time towards the afternoon since they had to work on the fields during morning hours. Some students expressed that they had to attend to their ailing parents/ grandparents/family members and take them to hospitals. By evening, when they are back home, it becomes difficult for them to keep abreast with the lessons. Parents whose children are in lower grades

often feel that it would be better to let the children repeat the next academic year. Majority of students do not have access to smartphones or TV at home in addition to poor Internet connectivity. There is no or less income for huge population due to closure of business and offices. The data package costs are comparatively high against average income earned, and continuous access to Internet is a costly business for the farming community.

Other issues include safety of students from domestic violence and child abuse that are on the rise as the perpetrators at home or in the neighborhood, which is a mental distraction and threat to the learners. With students now experiencing homeschooling during this COVID-19 pandemic, conducive environment at home for all standards and socio-economic conditions is also not uniform. Studies indicate that the hardest hit is economically disadvantaged groups.

Opportunities for Teaching and Learning

Although there have been overwhelming challenges for educators, schools, institutes and the government regarding online education from a different angle, there are several opportunities created by the COVID-19 pandemic for the unprepared and the distant plans of implementing e-learning system. Issues like slow internet bandwidth and costly data packages in comparison to the income of the people also make accessibility and affordability inadequate.

It has forged a strong connection between teachers and parents. The homeschooling requires parents to support the students' learning academically and economically. Children with disabilities needing additional and special support during this ongoing emergency are greatly benefitted.

In such challenging times, teachers must develop creative initiatives that assist to overcome the limitations of virtual teaching. Teachers are actively collaborating with one another at a local level to improve online teaching methods. There are incomparable opportunities for cooperation, creative solutions and willingness to learn from others and try new tools as educators, parents and students share similar experiences. Many educational organizations are offering their tools and solutions for free to help and support teaching and learning in a more interactive and engaging environment. Online learning has provided the opportunity to teach and learn in innovative ways unlike the teaching and learning experiences in the normal classroom setting.

Discussion

A critical analysis of online medium of instruction, with all its advantages and disadvantages is here to stay. As the conventional pedagogy used for face-to-face learning is not feasible for online learning, a range of pedagogy has to be introduced for online learning, and equip teachers and students through training in order to use it optimally.

Authentic assessments and timely feedback of online distance learning would be helpful for such more of learning. The affordability and accessibility to these online infrastructures for all the learners of varied economic backgrounds are still a challenge. There is also a need to cater to the students with special needs having learning difficulties, such as hearing impairment, visual impairment and mobility disabilities, require additional training with support and guidance. There is a need for investing time and resources to explore and research the best alternatives for the special educational needs of these learners.

As all students' assignments and examinations are carried out from home, it is challenging for educators to find the authenticity of the work and the actual learning taking place. Moreover, many parents guide and support their children during their learning process, and the extent and degree of support varies greatly. Grading of students is another area of study as no proper criteria are developed and effectively used.

Conclusion

The study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning across the world concludes that although various studies have been carried out, in the case of developing countries, suitable pedagogy and platform for different class levels of higher secondary, middle and primary education need to be explored further.

Policy-level intervention is required to improve this situation. Further exploration and investigation on effective pedagogy for online teaching and learning is an area for research. Need for developing tools for authentic assessments and timely feedback is found to be another area of study. The affordability and accessibility for all the learners of varied economic background is identified as a challenge, for which the educational tools developer could focus on customization. Education system across the world needs to invest on the professional development of teachers, especially on ICT and effective pedagogy, considering the present scenario. Making online teaching creative, innovative and interactive through user-friendly tools is the other area of research and development. This would assist and prepare the education system for such uncertainties in the future.

Teachers and students/ learners should thus be oriented on use of different online educational tools. After the COVID-19 pandemic when the normal classes resume, teachers and learners should be encouraged to continue using such online tools to enhance teaching and learning.

BOOK REVIEW**Leading Education through COVID-19: Upholding the Right to Education****Prof. Fernando M Reimers**

The book authored by Prof. Fernando M Reimers, is a very relevant and timely work that is being published during Covid-19 second wave. Prof. Reimers is the Ford Foundation Professor of the practice of International Education and Director of the Global Education Innovation Initiative and of the International Education Policy Master's Program at the Harvard University. An expert in the field of Global Education, his research and teaching focus is on how to educate children and youth so that they can thrive in the 21st century.

In this book (ISBN: B08K4SYXZZ) of 352 pages, priced at \$ 13 (paperback) and sold by Amazon Asia-Pacific Holdings Private Limited in kindle edition was released on 25th September 2020, Prof. Reimers and forty-five of his former students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education examined how the pandemic has affected the students around the world and transformed a variety of roles in the education eco-system. They illustrate the multi-dimensional educational impact of this plague, how various institutions in this educational eco-system interact and complement one another in attempts to sustain educational opportunity. They provide a complex view of this impact and the responses to it drawn from various vantage points in the educational enterprise, of the educational consequences of the pandemic and its possible aftermath.

This is a crucible moment for education, one that will test our resolve and collective commitment to the idea that education is indeed a universal human right. This book is an invitation to join the global education movement in upholding the right to education.

As the COVID-19 Pandemic ravages the planet changes big and small are changing human lives and our future prospects. Among those changes, few other than the discovery and effective distribution of a vaccine will be as consequential as the changes taking place in our schools. The disruption to our schools could cause the biggest education

setback in history, gravely impacting the lives of students, their future prospects, their communities and widening inequality in unprecedented ways. This is a crucible moment for education, one that will test our resolve and collective commitment to the idea that education is indeed a universal human right. This book examines how the Pandemic has disrupted educational opportunity, from the vantage point of leaders of the global education movement who, in a variety of organizations, work to advance the universal human right to education. The book illuminates how the Pandemic has impacted students around the world and transformed a variety of roles in the education eco-system. Illustrating the multidimensional educational impacts of this plague it shows how various institutions in this ecosystem interact and complement one another in attempts to sustain educational opportunity. Drawing on various leadership vantage points in the educational enterprise, the book provides a complex view of this impact and the responses to it, of the educational consequences of the Pandemic and of its possible aftermath.

The measures adopted to mitigate the spread of the virus have disrupted schools and universities, in most cases limiting in personal instruction. Even as some schools are preparing to open, the second wave have things uncertain once again. A number of alternative arrangements have been made to mitigate the impact of such disruption to education in the learning opportunities of students.. We know little about the effectiveness of these alternative mode of delivery of education and the extent to which they will leave prepare students as they would otherwise been, less interested in continuing their education, or about how these effects differ for different groups of students. The facts gathered till now are not very encouraging.

The forty-two essays included in the book describe how the pandemic has impacted students around the world and transformed a variety of roles in the education eco-system. The effects have been multi-dimensional and illustrate

how different constituents in this eco-system interact and complement one another in an attempt to sustain educational opportunities. They provide a complex view of this impact and the responses to it, one drawn from different vantage points in the educational enterprise, of the educational consequences of the pandemic and of its possible aftermath.

The authors of these essays are no ordinary group of educators. They are graduates of a renowned university and of a program designed to attract people committed to advancing educational change around the world and contribute to a world that is more inclusive and sustainable.

In the everyday actions with which these leaders face the current movement described in the forty-two essays included in the book, there is a sense of courage, commitment, love and perseverance in spite of all difficulties, not to give up in the effort to educate, to continue to push for universal

right to education. The author is hopeful of the outcomes of such endeavours and he says that “Hope at the end of this pandemic, of this long night of suffering and pain, the sun will rise again, and the world will still be one where everyone belongs, where we can live in peace with one another, where we can relate to this earth in ways that allow the many species now living on the planet, including ours, the chance to live much longer.”

It was a pleasure to review the book here that deals with such an important topic with great sensitivity and care. It is yet another great work of Prof. Reimers and graduates of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The book has described the intricacies and complexities of the pandemic lucidly and is sure to provide valuable insights to all its readers. The book is strongly recommended for the education fraternity and all others who wish to make a difference to the lives of the people, and especially the students during these difficult times.

BOOK REVIEW

Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determination of Human Behaviour

Dr. David R. Hawkins

The book 'Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determination of Human Behaviour' is one of the most popular books published in recent times. Authored by Dr. David R. Hawkins, the book was originally published in 1994 (ISBN Number ISBN-13 978-9380480558) and re-published in 2014 by Hay House Publishing, USA. In its 416 pages, it explains the connection between individual levels of consciousness and human behavior. Building on the accumulated wisdom of applied kinesiology (diagnostic muscle-testing to determine the causes of allergies and ailments) and behavioral kinesiology (muscle-testing to determine emotional responses to stimuli), the author has taken muscle-testing to the next level, in an effort to determine what makes people and systems strong, healthy, effective and spiritually sound.

Power vs. Force has become a spiritual classic and a massively influential work across the world. The whole book has reflected Hawkins's insights of decades of experience since original publication. This book is a must have for anyone who hasn't discovered the power of Dr. Hawkins' work or for those who want to deepen their sense of his unique vision for health, happiness and healing.

The book - Power vs. Force by David R. Hawkins is based on the author's four decades of Kinesiological research, which aims to reveal the truth about human consciousness and its relation to life in general. The outcome was that humans can access a "truth" signal that allows them to lead fulfilling lives if they are able to detect it at their level of consciousness. Those who don't have this ability tend not only suffer but also fail miserably at life as well as relationships with others.

Every action and thought on earth can be tested with kinesiology, provided both the test subject and tester have a consciousness level of 200 or higher. Primitive societies tend to be fearful in nature because they are collectively stuck at a lower consciousness level. Modern civilization

has an average collective consciousness of 204, which is open to new possibilities. Most people will only gain five points on the scale during their lifetimes, but those who seek truth may become enlightened with levels ranging from 700–1000.

In Power vs. Force, David R. Hawkins, reveals to the readers secret information hitherto shared only by great thought leaders and some Nobel Prize winners. Analyzing the basic nature of human thought and consciousness itself, the author makes available to everyone the key to penetrating the last barrier to the advancement of civilization and science. He details how people may resolve for themselves the most crucial of all human dilemmas--how to instantly determine the truth or falsehood of any statement or supposed fact. Hawkins, who worked as a "healing psychiatrist" during his long and distinguished career, uses theoretical concepts from particle physics, nonlinear dynamics, and chaos theory to support his study of human behaviour.

A fascinating work that will intrigue readers in all walks of life, this book takes a scientific approach to spirituality and religion. It is a documented study into spirituality using kinesiology. The book explains a logarithmic scale of consciousness in that everything and every person who has ever lived can be "calibrated". This scale starts at zero and goes to 1,000 the level of Christ, Buddha and Krishna. These levels are segmented again into 17 categories. The level of 200 is the Line of Integrity as Dr. Hawkins describes it. This line is the break-even line of consciousness.

The author's work has been praised by many people, including Mother Teresa and Nobel Prize-winning chemist Linus Pauling. Mother Theresa said, "A Beautiful gift of writing...spread joy, love and compassion through what you write. The fruit of these three is peace, as you know". As a psychiatrist, the author says he experienced the breakthroughs described in his book firsthand. He offered a way to calibrate each chapter of his book based on its

level of truthfulness—a scale from 710 to 890. Based on this system, the author himself would be considered enlightened (an energy level between 700 and 1,000).

Hawkins claimed to have overseen thousands of kinesiologic tests, but admits that there are some limitations with the process. Even if you're at energy level 200, which is a very high level, there's still 30% chance of error. If you haven't reached that level yet, the accuracy rate will be even lower. However, those who have attained this higher energy level will have a higher success rate when it comes to these tests.

The author states that consciousness is the state of being aware of one's surroundings, thoughts and feelings. It can also be defined as an individual's awareness and perception of their environment and themselves. Consciousness plays an important role in many disciplines including philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, cognitive science, computer science and artificial intelligence. There are a number of competing theories about how consciousness arises from biological processes within the brain.

The implications of a shared consciousness are significant. They impact every aspect of human endeavors, from commerce to the arts to politics. It is beneficial for people who have heightened their awareness levels in order to distinguish between truth and falsehoods.

In the field of consciousness, a person's physical health can be measured by their level of truthfulness. The initial kinesiology test for measuring one's level of consciousness is called "calibration." This test measures how much an indicator muscle in one's arm responds to statements that are true or false. A high level of consciousness indicates good health and will help a person detach from unhealthy behaviors or stresses that put his/her body at risk. Every body has its natural expiration date, but the overall quality and length of life depends on one's level of consciousness.

There are people who use the process of enlightenment for their own gain. True consciousness is not about glamour, wealth or fame; it's about understanding how things work and existing in a natural way within that world.

The book deserves special mention in Covid times. Taking cue of the crux of the studied done by Dr. Hawkins, eminent Naturo-therapist Dr. Harshal Sancheti, Nasik has done micro studies into these facets of human psyche and

has said that positive vibrations can help us all in fighting different ailments including Covid effectively by creating positive vibrations

Dr Sancheti opines that as per estimation, the Covid virus has a vibration of 5.5 Hz and dies above 25.5 Hz. For humans with a higher vibration, infection is a minor irritant that can soon be eliminated! The reasons for having low vibration could be Fear, Phobia, Suspicion, Anxiety, Stress, Tension, Jealousy, Anger, Rage, Hate, Greed, Attachment or Pain ... And so.....we have to understand to vibrate higher, so that the lower frequency does not weaken our immune system.

The frequency of the earth today is 27.4 Hz, but there are places that vibrate very low like Hospitals Assistance Centers, Jails, and Underground etc. It is where the vibration drops to 20 Hz, or less.

For humans with low vibration, the virus becomes dangerous. The vibration of certain negative aspects of life has been assessed to be as mentioned below - Pain 0.1 to 2 Hz, Fear 0.2 to 2.2 Hz, Irritation 0.9 to 6.8 Hz, Noise 0.6 to 2.2 Hz, Pride 0.8 Hz and Superiority 1.9 Hz.

A higher vibration on the other hand is the outcome of behaviour like Generosity 95 Hz, Gratitude 150 Hz and Compassion 150 Hz or more. The frequency of Love and compassion for all living beings is 150 Hz and more and unconditional and universal love from 205 Hz

So it is time to Vibrate Higher! What helps us vibrate high? It is Loving, Smiling, Blessing, Thanking, Playing, Painting, Singing, Dancing, Yoga, Tai Chi, Meditating, Walking in the Sun, Exercising, Enjoying nature, etc. Foods that the Earth gives us: seeds-grains-cereals-legumes-fruits and vegetables-

Drinking water helps us vibrate higher.... The vibration of prayer alone goes from 120 to 350hz

So let us sing, laugh, love, meditate, play, give thanks and live happily!

Let's vibrate high...!!!

Note: Sir David Ramon Hawkins, M.D, Ph.D. (Born 3 June 1927, Died: 19 September 2012) was a nationally renowned psychiatrist, physician, researcher, spiritual teacher, lecturer, researcher and teacher on consciousness.

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