Awadh International Journal of Information Technology and Education (AIJITE)

(Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION CHARGES

PRINTED IN INDIA

Awadh International Journal of Information Technology and Education

Contents

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Online Teaching and Learning Process: Its Pros and Cons

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ABSTRACT

The covid-19 pandemic forced educational institutions to suspend temporarily face to face teaching learning process and move to online model of instructional delivery. This new model of instruction delivery ensured uninterrupted educational activities not only in the schools but also in higher educational institutions. The online teaching learning has various advantages and disadvantages. To understand the real potentials of any technology in education we must try understand its historical process of development. This paper presents a discourse on pros and cons of the use of online teaching and learning process and how past experiences guide us to use the technology judiciously in education.

Keywords: Online teaching-learning, Advantages and limitation of online teaching-learning, Covid-19 pandemic, School closures, past experiences.

INTRODUCTION

The exponential growth of the digital technology and easier access to the information have brought remarkable changes in the social, political, economic and educational field. The digital technology brought a lot of changes in teaching-learning process and a lot of experts of education talk to harness the potentials of digital technology in the field of education without considering its risks and consequences. Prior 2020, some claimed that the technology enables the teachers to experiments in pedagogy, democratize the classroom and try to reach the digital generation while others highlighted the drawbacks of digital technologies in education. But emergence of covid-19 pandemic changed the entire scenario of teaching learning process. The pandemic brought all the activities up to level of freeze including the

education all over the world. The education is a backbone of any nation and stopping of educational activities can adversely affect the development of the nation (Idris, et. al., 2011; Bansal, 2020). Therefore, the educational institutions made effort to continue the education by moving from traditional teaching-learning to online platform with digital technologies. Consequently, this situation forced the educational institution to move on digital mode for teaching learning process (Todd, 2020; Ray & Shrivastva, 2020; Verma, et. al. 2020).

However, the major concerns for quality of teaching and learning are closely related with how well the content is designed and executed (Muthuprasad, et.al., 2021). Besides this, the effectiveness of teaching with digital technology is directly related to the understanding of constraints faced by teachers and students, and curation of contents for online environment. But there are number of studies showing that the teaching learning process through online mode facing various issues, challenges and constrains during this covid-19 pandemic (Allen, Rowan & Singh, 2020; Barak, 2020; Kulal & Nayak, 2020). At the same time, the teachers are struggling to function in covid-19 pandemic as effective as in normal situation in absence of real classroom setting through online mode. Most of the students are digital natives, they grown up with technology and have better understanding of it in comparison of their teachers. These teachers were not fully prepared to utilize the digital technologies in their teaching learning process but the pandemic covid-19 forced them to do so. The teachers prepared haphazardly themselves to face this new situation. This new situation created a lots of problems in-front of the teachers and students. The environment of the classroom now entirely changed due to massive use of digital technologies in teaching learning process.

ONLINE TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Every subject has some topics, ideas or concepts a little complex and teacher feels heat to teach them to students. Sometimes students feel boring, tedious and avoid to attend the class in which teacher is teaching such type of the topic. Here the teacher can use new methods or technology to teach the concepts/ideas/and topic to the students if they see clearly a compelling reason to do so. The use of technologies in education needs a solid rationale about integration of technology in education which satisfy Cost of the technology, and plausible reply to the technology critics. When you are infusing technologies in education especially for teaching and learning, this infusion of technology in teaching should be:

- Extend learning beyond what could be done without technology.
- Introduce technology in context.
- Include opportunities for students to study relationships among science, technology, and society.
- Foster the development of skills, knowledge, and participations as good citizens in a democratic society.
- Contributes to the research and evaluation of social studies and technology.

TEACHERS AND ONLINE TEACHING

The vision for learning and teaching in digital ages expects that the teachers will use various technological tools (if not all) in their teaching and learning process intended for digital generation. The digitalisation of society started by 1980 and it rides on tide wave after 1990 while after 2000 the entire face of world changed due to this digitalisation process. The 21st century students in classroom are digital natives because they grow up with technologies and it woven up in their day-to-day activities. Digital natives are surrounded by the various digital devices and they always busy in doing more than one works(multitasking), thus their mind think various thought parallel. The teachers who are teaching these students are not well skilled in using of digital technologies. Prensky (2001) described the digital natives are born surrounded by digital media; thus, their brains might function differently. He describes the digital natives' practices as:

Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to "serious" work.

According to Prensky (2001) the teachers who are teaching the digital generation are digital immigrants because the technology entered in life of this generation after their schooling. Teaching of digital generation is a serious challenge in front of teachers because most of the teachers are lagging behind in digital skills with this generation.

The digital technology is changing the student's behaviour and these changes are irreversible. These irreversible changes accentuated the teachers to change their teaching strategies to inculcate the skills needed in digital era like emotional intelligence, critical problem solving, virtual collaboration, team work, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, information literacy and communication. Sudden surge of covid-19 pandemic forced the teachers to adopt the digital mode of teaching immediately. At initial stage most of the teachers and other stakeholders were neither prepared to face this unprecedented situation of covid-19 pandemic nor skilled to use online platform to teach students virtually. But teachers tried to prepare themselves as soon as possible to teach the students digitally and entered in arena with whatever skilled he learnt. But teaching students in digital mode not only need the skill to operate digital technologies but other skills also such as communication, compassion and empathy, patience, subject expertise, and time management. According to Prensky (2001), It is necessary for teachers to communicate in the language their students understand, which requires them to go faster, less step-by step, more parallel, with more random access. Students find it easier to share their feeling, experiences and learning difficulties to others on virtual environment. It may be possible Today's students are changing very fast; therefore, the teachers also need to change more rapidly so that they can drive the wagon loaded with digitally skilled students. Thus, the effectiveness of teachers in digital age may matter more than previous. The digital age's teachers play the role of instructional designer; trainer; collaborator; team coordinator; advisor; and universal learner

with the support of technologies; therefore, the digital tools are partial constituents.

ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

The pandemic covid-19 shaped the classroom environment based of digital technologies. The internet become major most important medium to deliver the instruction to student. The Internet has enabled the delivery of instruction at a lower cost in comparison of face-to-face classroom teaching; thus, it provides more opportunities for learners to take courses (Murday et. al., 2008). Many researches were conducted to examine the behaviour of teachers and students toward the online. At initial stage of covid-19, most of the teachers and other stakeholders were neither prepared to face this unprecedented situation of covid-19 pandemic nor skilled to use online platform to teach students virtually. But various educational institutions (Universities, colleges, and other educational organizations) organized different workshops, faculty development programs, short-term courses and webinars to train the teachers to teach virtually. These courses played vital roles in enabling the teachers to utilize the available online resources effectively and efficiently in their teaching learning process (Kulal, & Nayak, 2020). Various studies revealed that the teachers started using many technological tools for conducting classes for the learners who also accessed the contents online to cope with the changing situation in the academic environment (Bordoloi, Das, & Das, 2021). The google classroom, google meet, zoom app, WhatsApp, YouTube etc. become major tools in the hand of teachers to mitigate the distress of online teaching learning process. These technological tools of teaching learning enabled the educational institutions to pursue creative approaches in education in a very short notice. The educational institutions are asserting to utilize these technological tools to continue the teaching learning process, but it is important to note that the learning quality depends on the level of digital access and efficiency (Muthuprasad et. al., 2021). The digital access is one of the big challenges in our country. A big chunk of the society in India belongs to the weaker section and the children of this section have inadequate access to the necessary digital devices for online learning. The students of this section are struggling to overcome the effect of sudden closure of the schools due to covid-19 pandemic. This online technology allows teachers to engage, interact with, and inspire students in and out of your online classes. Plus, certain types of technology tools like podcasts or video streaming platforms can help meet the unique learning styles of your cohort. Many of the technologies below are used to operate online education programs—including lectures, labs, group meetings or class tutorials. Plenty of higher education institutions have already integrated some of the following technology tools into their degree programs today.

- Learning Management System (LMS) such as Moodle, Canvas, Blackboard, Google classroom allow teachers to manage courses, assign homework and test, manage the students reply and feedbacks and also track the students' progress.
- Virtual classroom tools like zoom, google Meet, Microsoft Teams, and Webex are used to host synchronous online lectures and let participants engage in breakout rooms or 'share their screen' with one another.

- YouTube, Social networking sites, WhatsApp, Telegram etc. provide platforms for collaborative and cooperative teaching and learning activities.

These tools enabled the teachers to carry out their responsibilities in this crucial pandemic time. With the help of these tools, the teachers not only regularly provided the instructions but also monitored the students' progress.

PROS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

The online teaching has many potentials benefits in teaching and learning process. the teachers are trying to avail those benefits in their teaching activities. Any new intervention always brought pros and cons and online teaching is not free from it. The pros of using online teaching and learning process are summarise as under:

1. Online teaching and learning environment ensure full participation of students.

Online digital tools help to engage all students, including shy students who wouldn't normally raise their hands in class. Online engagement systems allow you to regularly check in with students for feedback on course materials and assignments. Student insights can also be used to help spot areas where learners might be struggling.

2. More pedagogical innovation is possible

Technology allows for more active learning. You can increase engagement through online polling or asking quiz questions during online lectures, with instantaneous results. If you're using a digital textbook, subject matter is dynamic and timely with embedded links to relevant materials or immersive multimedia. Video conferencing software, live polls and discussion boards are all ways to form feedback loops with your students.

3. Availability of resources

From apps and e-textbooks to organizational platforms, there's no shortage of tools that can transform the classroom. There are lots of digital teaching as well as learning tools are available for making learning process as a fun. The teacher can use classroom 'gamification,' competitive scenarios, and the distribution of points and rewards to make the online classroom more fun and engaging. The key to ensuring these methods are also effective is designing them to support your course learning objectives. Digital storytelling, where students use simulations to immerse themselves in a fictional environment, can make learning more exciting and relatable for students. Gamification also allows for interactive lessons and can reduce passivity in the classroom.

4. Collaboration and cooperation

Digital technologies enabled the learners to work in collaboration and cooperation. Now students can start their project in group by sitting anywhere in the world. Through technology, students can start working on a project together in class and seamlessly collaborate, communicate and bounce ideas off one another using social media, interactive whiteboards and more. Physical and social barriers no longer exist, letting students work together from anywhere and at any time. The various social networking sites and

collaborative tools enabled students to engage in spontaneous discussions and find instant answers to problems or questions they may have about a topic.

5. Automation of tedious task

With the help of the online teaching tools teachers can speed up tedious, time consuming tasks, such as keeping track of students' attendance, student's performance, submission of the assignments and projects, etc. These tools can streamline grading for writing assignments, discussions and participation, as well as answer common student questions, which otherwise could seem daunting due to their objective nature. Integration of technology in education could reduce the amount of time spent on minor tasks.

6. Instant access to the current information

There is value in having textbooks and course materials that are always up to date, which can even include additions suggested by students. This also fosters a more collaborative learning environment—students can share information, work together on group projects and interact with their instructor online. Educational technology enables students to engage in an ongoing cycle of learning: before, during and after class. Thus, the using technology to help teachers and students understand the trends and patterns that are going to affect them is transformative.

7. Flexibility in time and place

Online teaching and learning process has given students more choice in, and control over, their learning experiences. Learning tools have also given teachers the flexibility in how to deliver their lectures or labs. For instance, students can tune into live-streamed lectures hosted at a specific time, while others can view lecture recordings on their own if they're unable to attend a live session. Plus, real-time lessons in online learning can help students feel a great sense of belonging and camaraderie that would otherwise be lost.

8. Classroom technology is a cost-effective alternative to traditional course materials

Technology can help save students hundreds during a semester. Rather than asking students to buy a copy of five different textbooks, some professors might want to direct students to their institution's library or adopt open-source textbooks.

CONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

The online teaching has various cons also. Soe of them are given here.

1. Distraction during online class

Tech savvy students may find it hard to concentrate in class when a wide range of digital devices are around them. It can be hard to keep students' attention while lecturing behind a screen. The students could open various site of their choice during the class, they could move on after joining the online class to another work. The teacher should

develop some 'signature attention activities' which can engage students in the teaching and learning process.

2. Less Social interactions

Th online classes create virtual environment in which students can not interact as they can in their face-to-face offline classes. The blended classroom can play a crucial role in overcoming on this problem. The blended classroom can create assignments in class that use both technological tools as well as oral presentations and group collaboration. It could make student learning has the potential to become more dynamic and interactive.

3. Online teaching and learning can foster cheating in class and on assignments

Students have always found ways to cheat, but the digital age makes it even easier—from copying-and-pasting someone else's work to hiring an essay-writer from an online essay mill. Here, digital technology could end up hindering students' professional development.

While technology could be seen as yet another avenue for cheating, it's possible to structure assignments and exams in a way that makes cheating difficult. Alternatively, you can make exams open-book and focus on problem-solving and mastery rather than retention. Some classroom software allows you to set questions that are subtly different for every student, making them focus on the technique rather than the answer.

4. The quality of research and sources students find may not be credible

The Internet is a blessing and a curse. The students may need guidance on identifying legitimate and unreliable sources. Many colleges have writing centres that can help with this. You can also use OER—ranging from lecture notes, examinations, assignments and textbooks—and adapt them to fit the needs of your course and students.

5. Some online classroom technologies could eventually replace teachers

Classroom technology has helped position educators as a 'guide on the side' versus a 'sage on the stage.' But that shift in the role that professors play has the potential to put them on the side-line especially with online learning. Technology has automated many learning processes such as grading. With asynchronous online learning especially, it's possible that students could now have little-to-no interactions with their educators compared to their experiences in the traditional classroom.

6. Lesson planning become more laborious and complex in online teaching learning process.

The task of adapting new and innovative technology into your online class can seem daunting or overwhelming. In many ways though, using technology can become as natural to you as any daily activity. The lesson planning for online to address the need of digital natives is not simple task, because the students are well versed in digital skills and some more skilled than the teachers.

7. Students don't have equal access to technological resources

The social and economic factors paly very significant role in access of the technology needed for online classes. A large part of society has not access to those technologies. An online education should be accessible to all students. But some students can't afford digital devices for online class. Thus, online teaching and learning widening the gap between have and have not.

PAST EXPERIENCES WITH TECHNOLOGY

Technologies have brought a lot of advancement in the field of education. Development of computer and other digital technologies have added new feathers in teaching and learning process. With the help of digital technologies, we successfully minimized the impact of pandemic covid-19 on education. However, knowing the history of technology in education is useful only if we apply what we know about the past and how we are going to apply in future. The conclusion of those experiences can be summaries in following headings.

1. No technology is a panacea for education.

Most current, capable online teaching and learning resources do not offer quick easy or universal solution for educational problem. The online classes, materials and strategies are usually tools in a larger system and must be integrated carefully with other resources and with teaching activities. The pandemic covid-19 forced stakeholders of the education system to shift on online classes for continuing the education. The market players of the digital technology in education exploited the situations and 'oversold' it. The government policies also put the oil in flame. But the overuse of online classes can create more problem than the solution provided by it in education. A judicious and realistic planning is necessary to harness the potential of online classes in education.

2. Teachers usually do not develop the teaching materials and curriculum

Teaching is one of the most time and labor-intensive job in the society (Roblayer, 2011). With so many demands on their time, most of the teachers cannot be expected to develop software or create complex technology-based teaching materials. Most of the time the companies, personnel in funded projects at different levels develop the learning materials. This is one of the most crucial issues in the field of digital education. Because those developers develop the learning materials in accordance of generalized need. Therefore, these learning materials fail to cater the local need. Until unless teachers are not involving in the field of material development, the local needs will be always left out.

3. Technically possible but not equally desirable and feasible

As a popular saying is that today's technology is yesterday's science fiction. But science fiction also shows us that technology brings undesirable as well as desirable changes. For example, distance technology has allowed to attend professional conferences online, rather than traveling to another location, people continue want to travel and meet face to face (Roblayer, 2011). Human cloning is technologically possible but not acceptable in the society.

In same way, the genetic engineering is increasingly feasible. All of these new technological horizons make it evident that it is time to analyses carefully the implication of each implementing decision. Better technology demands that we become critical consumer of its power and capability. We are responsible for deciding just which science fiction become reality.

4. Things change faster than teachers can keep up

The resources and methodologies of teaching are changing continuously. The technological development further accelerated this change. Gone are those days-if, indeed, they ever existed, when a teacher could rely on the same handouts, homework, or lecture notes from year to year. It is very difficult to predict the new technological development in the field of education but it would be different from present. That's why, the teachers must anticipate and accept the inevitability of change and need for continual investment of their time.

TEACHERS ALWAYS WILL BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN TECHNOLOGIES

With each new technological development in the field of education, the old question resurfaces: will technologies replace the teachers? The developers of the first instructional computer systems in the 1960s foresaw them replacing many teacher positions; some advocates of today's distance learning methods envision a similar impact on future education. Yet the answer of this old question is same as was earlier; Good teachers are more essential than ever. Society needs more teachers who understand the role of technology plays in society and in education, who are prepared to take advantages of its power, and who recognize its limitations. In and increasinglytechnological society, we need more teachers who are both technology savvy and child centered.

CONCLUSION

The sudden rise of covid-19 pandemic fosters the online teaching and learning process. Pandemic covid-19 created an entirely different environment in which the schools' main goal was to continue the teaching and learning process without compromising the students and staff health. This situation forced educational organisation to move on online classes. But this new context of the teaching learning is reality and it enable the teaching learning process to be continued in this pandemic era, when other things were completely closed. Once it was a controversial topic, particularly in some areas such as the Arts, online teaching learning is now a commonplace in education (Allen, Rowan & Singh, 2020). There is a need of a more systematic, shared and strategic approaches to harness the potentials of online teaching learning process. In place of focusing on negative aspects of the covid-19, our focus should be to strengthen the partnerships among different stockholders of the education. The potentials of this partnership can mitigate the impacts of trauma associated with the loss of student's as well as teacher's social networks, stress related to not being in school (Hodges, Kerch & Fowler, 2020). In this way, the teachers and other stockholders of the education can enhance the quality of instruction for their learners by provide the support, guidance, and a helpful hand.

There are number of studies which claimed that most of the teachers believe that the shifting on online teaching learning process is acceptable due to this unprecedented situation of pandemic covid-19, but it cannot a substitute the offline classes. The teacher and students both face technical issues in handling of digital devices in the teaching learning process. Therefore, the teachers believed that the traditional method of teaching is better method for effective teaching (Kulal & Nayak, 2020).

In spite of various advantages as mentioned above, online teaching learning has number of disadvantages also, such as the learners feels isolation due to lack of interactions, distraction from path of learning due to availability of tons of distracting contents, and lack of hands-on activities. the ability of teachers and students to use the technology effectively in teaching and learning is another important limitation of the online teaching (Fedynich, 2014). These limitations are more evident for school going students who may not have online access or who have had limited experience with online learning tools, such as computers. The lack of needed skills for online teaching learning can make online teaching-learning less effective than the traditional method of teaching-learning. The learners though might have excellent knowledge in academics, if they may not possess the needed skills to deliver their acquired knowledge to others in online environment, this can leads them to errant activities like cheating in the test for assessment, misled to piracy and plagiarism, deteriorate the role of instructor, purely scientific fields that include practical cannot be properly studied through e-learning, the heavy use of some websites bring about unanticipated costs both in time and money.

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Defining the Scope of Inclusive Education for Sustainable Development CWSN-Multiple Disabilities in Current Situation

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ABSTRACT

The presentation seeks to identify within and across school differences in the quality of teachers to investigate the main barriers to equitable teaching and learning. Using a sample of 500 students enrolled in government schools in randomly selected villages from Nagpur (MH), Sundarnagar (HP), it estimates a multivariate model to identify sources of inequitable outcomes. It then discusses whether differences in achievement of marginalized children (such as based on gender, poverty and disability specially women with disability) are due to these children being clustered in particular schools or due to differences in teaching within the schools they attend.

In the context of recent policy efforts to improve learning levels in Uttar Pradesh, India, the second paper draws on teacher interviews and classroom observations to gain insights into both teacher perspectives towards learner diversity in the classroom, and teaching in practice. The presentation is based on in-depth research in 6 schools in 3 districts in Nagpur, with the aim of highlighting the positive efforts to provide equitable teaching and learning, and the challenges involved.

The paper puts the spotlight on a group of children who have been systematically excluded from learning assessments, namely children with disabilities. There are two key reasons for their exclusion: first because they remain invisible in assessment data; and secondly because the forms of assessment exclude many of them. This paper presents evidence from our research in Uttar-Pradesh and Nagpur on new approaches to identifying children with disabilities in conventional learning assessments with the

aim of showing comparisons in learning of children with different types of disabilities with those without disabilities. It further highlights those conventional approaches to literacy and numeracy excludes some children, and provides insights from our research on alternative ways in which learning assessments can be designed for inclusion.

Keywords: Inclusion Education, Sustainble Development, Multiple Disability.

INTRODUCTION

The education system in the entire world is changing and evolving constantly. Experts in Educational Sciences are directly involved in developing their own skills to be competent and able to meet the challenges of a socio-economic environment in a continuous process of change.

Inclusive education is one of the most sensitive ongoing issues, because not all children enjoy an education experience that enables them to develop to their full potential. Inclusion in the Indian context means primarily inclusion of those with physical or learning Disadvantage – whilst the thrust here is also about equality of educational opportunity in the socio-economic circumstances of the child. Inclusion in education means if it meansanything is respect for the diversity of all our children, and if this is to be realized mustinclude severalchanges of substance in terms of educational content, pedagogical anddidactical approach, the structure of the education system and educational strategies.Although many programs and projects are implemented to enable inclusion of children withdifferent special needs in mainstream schools, in many countries, the results are often positive, but dissemination of results and best practices is not systematically undertaken.

Problem statement:- Children can change the world and education can change the way children perceive the world. Inclusion refers to all children; because inclusive education is one in which all Children have access to quality education in an inclusive environment that provides three

COMPONENTS:

1. All children mean "children with disabilities, gifted children, homeless children, and childrenbelonging to nomadic groups, children belonging to linguistic minorities, ethnic or cultural,children with HIV or belonging to any other vulnerable groups.

2. Equality education - means creating real opportunities to achieve success in the learningexperience; in other words, the quality of education is not measured in terms ofperformance, graduation, infrastructure, technology and comfort, but the system capacity,the school and the teacher to create learning opportunities for every child;

3. Inclusive environment - which means that environment, is welcome, protect and educateAll children, regardless of gender, physical, intellectual, economic, linguistic or othercharacteristics (UNESCO).

Inclusive education is one of the top challenges in today's world (India), and whilst educationalsystems make efforts to become more inclusive, new teachers must be developed

to bemore inclusive in their future practice. University teachers involved in Education Studies arguably must address this in the theory and practice that they deliver on Teacher Training courses.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND RELATED LITERATURE

Recently we have seen innovations in the focus of research, as political moves thatchallenge the ways different children have been excluded and silenced. Inclusiveeducation is a child's right, not a privilege. The amount of current attention given tochildren and to childhood is unprecedented. Inclusion promotes quality and equitableeducation for all, without exclusion, including those who may be potentially marginalizedby learning need or social position. In a world affected by financial crises, attitudes aboutchildren's needs are very important.

Inclusive education is now firmly established as the main policy imperative with respect to children who have special education needs or disabilities. It is championed to remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination. Inclusion is however, a complex and contested concept and its manifestations in practice are many and various.

Recent studies demonstrated that if children's educational needs are not fulfilled in thefirst years of life, serious gaps will appear in their development. The attitudes ofadults, in all their different roles and relationships, affect children deeply. Children have been silenced and excluded in many ways, because they were underestimated. They havedifferent needs or special needs, and they need inclusive education for a properdevelopment. In fact, all children are born with sophisticated capacities and adults shouldnot restrict or limit their potential. Educators should work with children in new ways drivenby a rights perspective.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In this paper, we intend to assess to university teachers from the Teacher Training Department of "Indian"University, consider being their key efforts to support inclusive education, at the beginning of this year. The key argument of this study is that inclusive education is a real and urgent need for our educational system, starting with early childhood and ending with university's education. The main factors of inclusion are: the teachers, the colleagues in the classroom or school and the school environment. It's obvious that inclusion depends largely on the teachers' training, on their attitude and on their way to report to the children with SEN, as well as on the teaching strategies used.

The aim of this investigation is to find new ways of international support, ofcollaboration and good practice, with the professional involvement of experts in university education from Indian University, so that we can take new measures tocreate a professional environment for all our students that will become the next generation of teachers at all levels.

METHODOLOGY

The study started with a systematic review of current guidelines in teacher training fromInclusive Education frameworks available nationally and internationally and of the competencies required in this area for university teachers today. The next step was analyze

of the current situation and needs for training in inclusive education in theIndian Teacher Training Department. In recognition of the importance of professional learning we conducted a survey with open questions to identify teachers' ongoing professional learning needs about inclusive education. This is a big challenge for all but it isan opportunity to advance the Teacher Training Department as a change factor that promotes dialogue and participation, making possible well-being through an education ofquality for all without exception, for the commitment of the community. We also used focus group as a technique to collect data from 20 university teachers in our Department in India. They were voluntarily involved in the study. The survey was built to revealthe next professional concerns:

1. What is inclusive education in the vision of the teachers from the Teacher Training Department?

2. How do university teachers specialized in education made the distinction between inclusive education as a right and inclusive education as efficacy in their own practice?

3. How do university teachers develop their own competencies in the field of inclusive education?

4. What are the benefits of inclusive education for their perspectives?

We examined the personal arguments and the evidence presented for their personal professional development in this area, having the support and expertise for analyzing the findings from Indian University, India.

FINDINGS

Evidence shows that the quality of teaching has one of the largest impacts on students learning. Building teaching excellence through pre-service and in-service training is centralto making educational settings more inclusive. The teachers involved in the study started with a swot analysis of the inclusive education in India revealed that this is a real challenge for our staff. Findings revealed that the main strong points are: children with disabilities are included; intervention team; intervention instruments; efficient learning strategies: individualized learning, cooperative learning; partnership with family and local community; initial and continuous development of teachers. The low points are:discontinuities in educational policies and incoherence in reforms application; having acertificate of SEN; insufficient number of support teachers and hours for activities withchildren with SEN; a great number of children in the class; different assessment in primaryschool and national exams are not different. We also evaluated the opportunities - Indian money through national and international projects, teacher continuous development - and the mainbarriers: stereotypes and misjudgment; financial resources crises; infrastructure and inadequate material resources.

The situation of the Indian inclusion was analyzed by the 20 university teachers from the Teacher Training Department. They consider that inclusive education is a seriouspriority and they admit that most of their courses and seminars need continue improvement in this area and their interest to develop new skills is high. Their motivation to develop the

opportunities, to reduce the low points and to fight the barriers starts with their own preparation to promote inclusive education. During the focus group, the university teachers were interviewed with all the questions mentioned, so they offered an objective overview of their perspectives, efforts, actions and plans to develop their competencies in this area. We will present the findings in a synthetic perspective, to each question.

At the first question, they admit that inclusion requires a large vision and specific competencies for all teachers. Now teachers need to know that diversity is present in the classroom, and that they should attend to learners with a range of diverse needs. In this frame, it is imperative to develop the following professional aptitudes: researcher, strategic and resilient. They identified important educational aspects that every teacher needs to be inclusive: equality; promoting the same opportunities for all, quality; offering functional and meaningful learning and equity; responding to special educational needs.

At the second question part of the teachers report that a lack of teacher training in facilitating the learning of students with disabilities is a barrier to individuals being able to succeed in education. Knowing students' rights, it's not sufficient. Teachers' educational efforts are valued by the student success in time, not just in school. As with all professional learning activities, it is important to stay up-to-date with current thinking and keep building professional expertise as new research and knowledge emerges.

At the third question, the teachers presented all their actions and plans to develop the skills to provide an inclusive environment, where every student can learn and achieve their full potential. The last years' most of them were engaged in relevant professional learning activities to prepare their own development in this area: research, observation and practice, training courses and seminars, conferences, workshops, an important project about mentoring in inclusive education managed by one of our professor in which four colleagues were trainers in inclusive education. Some of them already published relevant studies about inclusive education.

Professional learning is most effective when it is relevant, collaborative and future focused, and when it supports teachers to reflect on, question and consciously improve their skills. According to the teachers interviewed, they also need to have high expectations for all (inclusive vision), develop inclusive projects including diverse teaching strategies and support systems (inclusive practices) and participate in a collective work. The group investigated from the Teacher Training Department proposed the development of a new master program about Interventions in inclusive school.

The last question proved the benefits of inclusive education per the university teachers involved in the study. All children benefit from inclusive education, because it allows them to: develop individual strengths and gifts, with high and appropriate expectations for each child, involve their parents in their education, foster a school culture of respect and belonging, inclusive education provides opportunities to learn about and accept individual differences, lessening the impact of harassment and bullying, develop friendships with a wide variety of other children, each with their own individual needs and

abilities andpositively affect both their school and community to appreciate diversity and inclusion on abroader level. The inclusive teacher has a holistic educational view with strong skills andexperience to participate in diverse contexts.

The module was creative and emancipator, designed to challenge and engage ALL theparticipants, including those with their own Specific Learning Needs (typically thisincluded students with Dyslexia) and those who had experienced previous educational rebuff because of socio-economic status (this included what we term 'non-traditional'students and those who had been 'looked after'/in care).

The module "Becoming an Educationist" was delivered mainly in 'workshop' mode,with role play and simulations, draw-to-learn and music workshops, real qualitativeresearch, student-led 'performances', active-, question- and project based learning – andchoice – for example, choice about which projects to submit for the final assessment.Students were required to 'blog' their learning as part of reflective practice – and to developa writing habit that thus also improved their formal academic writing.

The goal was to develop student self-efficacy at the same time as expanding their notionof what education was, what it could be and how it could promote inclusion and equalityfor all. The graduates from this module reported increased self-confidence and increasedacademic success. In a succeeding Becoming a Teacher module, they all cited "Becomingan Educationist" as a role model of good practice to harness in their own future teachingpractice. Ideally, we would have such a module at every level of an Education Studiesstudent's under- and postgraduate programmes. Inclusivity has to part of a trainee teacher'sown tuition if it is to be realized in a future teacher's practice.

CONCLUSIONS

Children need to be listened to, valued and re-evaluated. Their rights should be respected, no matter what economic issues affects adult's lives. Children need to be respected by Parents, careers and professionals, but this respect is shaped by their attitudes towards children and their own experiences of teaching, learning and assessment. Certain attitudes and practices affect many children in ways that are not beneficial, and which can harm or restrict them. The language and actions of power and regulation held by adults in making and overseeing children's lives has been explored through the ways in which research, thinking and practice around inclusive education is reconstructing education and children in new ways.

It is a fact, every educational system in the world needs to improve and work towardsthe best results for all. By respecting children's educational needs, and developingempowering curricula and pedagogy, we have the chance to regain essential universalvalues for peace, justice and welfare. We must reach out with empathy to those next to us,listen to children, and fight for justice, for principles and for values. The study had asignificant impact in our teachers' motivation to practice inclusive education. We need toincrease attention to our professional development as a factor that can contribute to ahealthy society and to a better live for children in India.

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3

The Importance of Dance in Education

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing dance in academics helps children develop skills that are necessary for learning such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Through the creative process, students are encouraged to use their imagination, collaborate with their peers to solve problems and discover multiple solutions to challenges.

Keywords: Creativity, Dance and Education.

INTRODUCTION

Learning, thought, creativity, and intelligence don't just come from the brain alone, but from the entire body. Movement combinations increase memory, order, and sequencing skills. Creating dances also increases self-esteem which is so very important to learning. We already witness the need for children to move throughout the day. Having experienced first hand the positive effects that music and dance have on students' development, I feel it is important for dance to be included in all elementary (and secondary) curricula.

There are so many reasons why dance is important to the health and development of our young people. Above all, children need to move! Any way to get kids moving on their feet is a must (especially in a digital era). Dance burns calories, strengthen muscles, improves balance, increases flexibility, and gives the heart a good workout. Dance has also been proven to increase cognitive development. Current research documents the importance of exercise on the brain and supports what dancers have always known – the body and mind are connected in vital ways.

Utilizing dance in academics also helps children develop skills that are necessary for learning such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Through the creative process, students are encouraged to use their imagination, collaborate with their peers to solve problems and discover multiple solutions to challenges.

"5 REASON STUDENTS SHOULD JOIN A DANCE CLASS"

1. Dancing is a mix of art and exercise which connects the mind and body, and makes one sharper and stronger.

Though dance had long been seen by parents only as a co-curricular addition something that the child stops learning or practicing in higher classes the spurt of dance movies and new-age career options

It lets you engage in an art form:

Dance is a holistic activity for the mind, body and soul. It aligns all these, and the participants are then more aware of their strength and weaknesses giving them an opportunity to identify them and work on them.

It's a stress buster

2. Music in itself is therapeutic.

Dance is a physical interpretation of what the music says. It is a great way to release energy, shed inhibitions and let your emotions out. When you dance you sweat, and you release feel-good endorphins that make you happy.

3. For personality development:

In times when technology and social media take almost everyone's time, dance is a great hobby where one can learn, enjoy and work out at the same time. Each class targets skilful progression to improve fitness levels, confidence, focus, concentration, team spirit, positive thinking, discipline, all-round development, posture and body language.

4. To positively channel your energy:

Using dance as a medium of physical activity and creative medium, this The programme aims at channelizing their energy in a resourceful manner. This is where the art of dance and the performing arts help develop skills, knowledge, and understanding..

5. To make fitness a lifestyle:

Dance helps improve overall fitness, endurance, muscle toning and strengthening. It involves cardiovascular/aerobic fitness, core and strength training and stretches for flexibility. Students work together in a group and this sense of team spirit encourages them.

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4

Inclusive Education: Challenges and Possibilities in India

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ABSTRACT

Though, inclusion is not a very new concept for knowledge society but recently it has been acknowledged as a prime medium to establish just and equitable society at national and international level Different policies and plans from local to international levels have clearly brought forth the need of educating all the children together for building an inclusive society to provide opportunities for leading a dignified life in the modern society. However, the reality in Indian context is somehow different. Evidently, it is highlighted as orienting philosophy at policy level but depicts extremely weak when observing minutely. Present paper is an attempt to highlight ground realities of inclusive education in India. The paper would concentrate on inclusive education from the perspective of inclusion of diversities in abilities in the educational process in India.

Keywords: Inclusion, Challenges, Measures and Possibilities.

INTRODUCTION

No society can survive progressively in absence of equality and social justice which are assumed as fundamental values of present civil society. Education has the potential to make people realize their relative existence and importance of their collective efforts to foster the process of holistic growth and development. Henceforth, due importance is given to bring awareness, enlightenment, sensitivity, capacity building for easy and equitable access to education and 'Education to All' has given an important place in the Indian constitution as fundamental right.

In this context, the words of Mrs. Vijaya Laxmi Pandit at UNESCO Convention on Education in 1996 seems most appropriate "Education is not merely a means for earning a living or an instrument for acquisition of wealth. It is an initiation in to the life of spirit, a training of human soul, and the pursuit of truth and practice of the virtue."

Therefore, education is the single potent tool to deal effectively the basic challenges and tensions in the modern times if it results in:

- Learning to know,
- Learning to do,
- Learning to be, and
- Learning to live together

These 'four pillars of learning' would help in preparing world to meet the present and future demands associated with growth and development [UNESCO Convention on Education, 1996]

There is a need to alter and transform education system in building potential to impart learning for life by respecting, accepting and accommodating diversities (social and individual), and by acknowledging that we all are in relative existence. It is nothing but making education inclusive which requires:

- Acknowledgement that all children can learn,
- Acknowledgement and respect for differences in children in terms of age, gender, language, ethnicity, disability etc.,
- Enabling educational structure and methodologies to meet the needs of all children.
- Conversion of process of education in a dynamic process which constantly evolves and which is the part of wider strategy to promote an inclusive society.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: MEANING

Inclusive education is an orientation and philosophy of education which depict he striving for establishment of a just and equitable social structure in which all have equal chance to grow and develop. The spirit of making education inclusive has been beautifully put forward in the words of 'B Lindqvist, UN Rapporteur' in 1994 as "All children and young people of the world, with their individual strategies and weakness, with their hopes and expectations have the right to education. Therefore, the school system of the country has to adjust to meet the needs of all children."

Thus, making education inclusive is about making all children learn together even it they differ from each other in styles and pace of learning. It is a dynamic process as it evolves continuously to address all aspects of child development, emotional, physical, intellectual, creative, and social etc. It is about celebrating the diversities and changing the rigid school system in order to meet the needs of all children. It is simply making education system and processes child-centred to provide the scope for acceptance and accommodation of all the

children irrespective of their diversities. And thus, it would promote the learning for living together. By considering each child a unique individual, it also provides opportunities for gaining knowledge that would affect his/her actions in qualitative terms for a relative growth in a shared existence. Making education inclusive requires challenging the pre-established assumptions with a will to break the limits posed by the rigid system.

PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There are certain principles providing a base to inclusive education-

- Every student has an inherent right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity.
- No exclusion on any ground, i.e. mainstreaming of all. All students can learning and benefit from education.
- Schools adapt to the needs of students rather than students adapting to the needs of the school.

Thus, inclusive education facilitates schooling that encourages students with special needs and students without special needs to learn together. Therefore, the students are able to live together (Salamanca World Declaration, 1994).

In inclusive education –

- Students' views are listened to and taken seriously.
- Individual differences between students are considered as a source of richness and diversity and not a problem.
- The diversity of needs and pace of development of students are required to be addressed through a wide and flexible range of responses.

Inclusion is different in its focus and direction from the prior conception and strategy of integration for main streaming the persons with special needs (mainly persons with physical and cognitive challenges). Integration views the diversities in individual capacities as limitations. In it, the system remains rigid; child has to adapt or in fact master it for success. While inclusion views the system as limiting force and strives to alter and adapt it to welcome, accept and accommodate diversities as individual differences. Inclusion is the reflection of the striving for dignified existence of all through the process of qualitative improvement for overall growth and development [Salamanca World Declaration (2004), NCF Draft (2005)].

NEED FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There are three basic predominating issues dominating the current educational scenario. These are:

- Issue of access to education by all the children,
- Retention and guarantee for their success, and
- Quality of education

Being a right for the empowerment of people, education must be in the reach of all in spite of their diversities in backgrounds or in abilities. It should not only accessible to all but also, it must have the capacity to accommodate all together and potential to enhance their abilities so that each one can avail opportunities for success. Quality is an overall concern which is inevitably attached with all aspects of education scenario. Inclusive education can be seen as a potent measure to effectively address the issue of quality in education. Inclusive education is considered as a mean to provide guarantee for full access, retention and success by enhancing quality of education as it aims at bringing fundamental changes in the system of education to make it all-encompassing.

Inclusive education revolves around inclusion of different marginalized groups in the regular system of education – inclusion of children with diverse abilities or children with mental and physical challenges or children with disabilities (CWD), inclusion of children from different socio-cultural and economic background and inclusion of girls etc. Educational inclusion of other groups has been given a due care by making different provisions; however inclusion of the first group is still a striking issue as it demands certain essential changes, adaptations, and modifications in the existing system of education.

National Curriculum Framework for Special Education (NCFSE), 2000 brought out by the NCERT recommended inclusive schools for all as a way to provide quality education to all learners as-

"— Segregation or isolation is good neither for learners with impairments nor for general learners without impairments. Societal requirement is that learners with special needs should be educated along with other learners in inclusive school, which are cost effective and have sound pedagogical practices".

Through, inclusion has always been questioned on utilitarian ground and for its feasibility in implementation, but researches have shown that inclusive education has resulted in improved social development and academic outcomes of all the children [Freud (1995) and Renaissance Group (1999)]. Better social development has also been marked by these research attempts as an outcome of inclusive education as learners are exposed to the real environment [Ryndak and Alper (1996), Alur and Rioux (2004)], they have to interact with other learners, each having unique characteristics, interests and abilities. This leads to positive attitudes and actions towards learners with special needs (particularly children with disabilities) as a result of studying together in an inclusive environment. Thus, inclusive education lays the foundations of an inclusive society that accepts respects and celebrates diverse abilities (Action Plan for Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities).

MAJOR ISSUES INVOLVED IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

When it comes to handle normal and children with challenge simultaneously, many challenges come to ground of reality:

- Bringing students with disabilities in mainstream life and opportunities with them,
- Bringing awareness to normal peers to accept the children with challenges in better way and creating opportunities for them both,
- Creating change to grow and adjust in normal life,

- Impact on academic performance of the class and extra efforts done by the teacher for children with diversities,
- Modification in teaching strategies
- Use of innovative teaching strategies

Teachers also exhibit a different approach towards inclusion children with disabilities:

- Larger population of students in a single classroom hamper the chances of giving individual and adequate attention by the teacher to the children. Strengthening present legal framework (in reference to the persons with challenges) by addressing its focus and orientation; and in this roles of legal experts, educational experts, parents and teachers become important in removing the existing loopholes by working together.
- Diversities, particularly in terms of abilities, turns out in serious problems like – communication gap between teachers and student, problems in assessing the progress of the child etc. which affect the quality of learning.
- Narrow attitude of teachers towards the understanding and skills of disabled students in relation to the needs and demands of the inclusive educational scenario.
- Lack of training inputs in terms of providing knowledge and understanding of physical and cognitive needs of children, ways, means and techniques to enhance their learning, and techniques of modifying the classrooms procedure to address diversities as well as knowledge of braille, sign language, behaviour management skills etc.

Beside such limitations, teachers also face many **administrative challenges** like:

- Lack of attention to prevailing diversity deteriorate the quality of teaching
- other student feel neglected
- disruptive behaviour disturbs classroom activities
- special children need specialized help which remain many times unfulfilled
- poor performance appraisal of the teachers
- system emphasises more accountability of teachers towards normal peers

Parents of children with challenge have concerns like whether their child would be able to cope and excel in the system? A system in which where requisite support and essential facilities are not available, class size is too big, teachers are less educated with inclusion etc.

However **parents of normal children** have following many questions in their mind regarding the policy of educational inclusion of children with challenges in the mainstream schools like: whether the teacher would be able to give adequate attention to their children, whether their children would be able to the perform appropriately etc.

MEASURES AND POSSIBILITIES TO SUPPORT INCLUSION IN OUR SOCIETY

As the problems and challenges are primarily emerging at large, there is a need to address these challenges in many ways. Thus, attention needs to be paid on following points:

- Legal framework and legislation: strengthening present legal framework (in reference to the persons with challenges) by addressing its focus and orientation; and in this roles of legal experts, educational experts, parents and teachers become important in removing the existing loopholes by working together.

- Sensitizing the society, school administration, parents, teachers and normal peers.

- Creating an accepting climate for inclusion in terms of accessibility, dequate physical infrastructure, clear guidelines, academic and support services.

- Teacher training and curriculum of teacher education to acquaint teachers with:
  - ❖ Complexities of inclusive classroom teaching.
  - ❖ Educational implications of the conditions causing physical and mental challenges in the children.
  - ❖ Legal issues involved in the education of children with special needs.
  - ❖ Education strategies and psychological aspects of disability.
  - ❖ Evaluation strategies for special children.
  - ❖ Creating learning environment.
  - ❖ Fundamental and social skills at primary level.
  - ❖ Individualized teaching.
  - ❖ Classroom management skills.
  - ❖ Establishing effective parent-teacher relationship.
  - ❖ Curriculum and its effective implementation, and
  - ❖ Ability to take initiative for technological adaptations and usage like computer, gadgets and other equipments.

- Some other measures for teachers:
  - ❖ Sensitizing them,
  - ❖ Providing knowledge, understanding, and skills require for dealing diversities in the classroom,
  - ❖ Providing them with the opportunities to keep themselves updated,
  - ❖ Evaluating and appraising the quality and suitability of teacher education curriculum keeping in focus the needs of educational inclusion,
  - ❖ Defining their roles clearly,
  - ❖ Relieving them of their heavy workload.

- Different agencies such as NCERT, NCTE, RIEs, DIETs, SCERT have to take initiative for both to develop a relevant pre-service teacher education programme, and for continuous professional development.

- Community is also required to play an active role to play for inclusion. Mass awareness programme and legal bindings are the keys for the same.

- A strict monitoring mechanism must be developed to ensure the fulfilment of guidelines and provisions strictly.

CONCLUSION

Education of special children has passed from the phases of special education to integration to inclusion, hence, it has been emerged as full-fledged philosophy but many challenges and limitations; mainly lack of adequate legal infrastructure, negative and neutral social attitude towards challenged people and their non-acceptance, lack of adequate scholastic and non scholastic support, lack of knowledge and understanding in teachers about challenges and diversities. Inadequacy of present teacher education programmes has been counted as a potent factor hindering the progress of educational inclusion in India. These are lacking in its focus and approach mainly due to its concern of preparing teacher for classroom containing average children. Therefore total transformation of the present system of education is required and essentially of teacher education (due to the important role and unique position of teachers in educational system particularly and in social system at macro level) to address the issue of inclusion in education effectively. Moreover, social inclusion and community participation are being termed as key to educational inclusion by both the groups; hence transforming social attitude towards acceptance of diversities a individual difference and not as problems or lacuna becomes essential. And this would happen only when inclusion takes form of a mass movement.

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Critical Pedagogy in Indian Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Critical pedagogy has its origin in critical theory of the Frankfurt School and the work of Brazilian thinker Paulo Friere. The critical pedagogy is a transformative approach in Education. It is the approach based on political act like Democracy and Social Justice. The students are given freedom to put forward their opinion and interact with the teacher to understand not mere the concept of subjects but the social, political, economic and historical mechanism too and develop the ability to think critically to bring positive changes in the prevailing society. Paulo Friere for the first time brought the application of concept of critical theory in Education, It is well depicted in his work' the Pedagogy of Oppressed'. Beside this, he also opposed the banking system of Education in which the teacher deposits or transmits the knowledge in the mind of learners and the learners neither do anything with the knowledge mere to collect and organize them. Friere emphasised on critical thinking based Education system where the oppressed alsoget equal chance to participate in the two way teaching learning process. Irrespective of few criticisms to critical pedagogy, it is an important instrument in our hands with which we can have the ability to transform this society.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, critical theory, critical thinking, dialogue, transform, society etc.

INTRODUCTION

Critical Theory is a school of thought that stresses the reflective assessment and critique of society and culture by applying knowledge from the social sciences and the humanities.

As a term, Critical Theory has two meanings with different origins and histories: the first originated in sociology and the second originated in literary criticism, whereby it is

used and applied as an umbrella term that can describe a theory founded upon critique; thus, the theorist Max Horkheimer described a theory as critical insofar as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them".

DEFINITION

Critical Theory was first defined by Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of sociology in his 1937 essay Traditional and Critical Theory: Critical Theory is a social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented only to understanding or explaining it. He described a theory as critical insofar as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them". Critical Theory involves a normative dimension, either through criticizing society from some general theory of values, norms, or "oughts", or through criticizing it in terms of its own espoused values.

The core concepts of Critical Theory are as follows:

1. That critical social theory should be directed at the totality of society in its historical specificity (i.e. how it came to be configured at a specific point in time), and

2. That Critical Theory should improve understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences, including geography, economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and psychology.

CRITICAL THEORY AND EDUCATION

Critical theorists have widely credited Paulo Freire for the first applications of Critical Theory towards education. They consider his best-known work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* a seminal text in what is now known as the philosophy and social movement of critical pedagogy.

"The radical, committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a 'circle of certainty' within which reality is also imprisoned. On the contrary, the more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side."

– Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy is a philosophy of education and social movement that has developed and applied concepts from critical theory and related traditions to the field of education and the study of culture. Critical pedagogist view teaching as an inherently political act, reject the neutrality of knowledge, and insist that issues of social justice and democracy itself are

not distinct from acts of teaching and learning. The goal of critical pedagogy is liberation from oppression through an awakening of the critical consciousness. When critical consciousness is achieved, it encourages individuals to bring change in their world through social critique and political action.

McLaren defines critical pedagogy as follows:

Critical pedagogy is a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structure of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and, nation state (McLaren, 1998, p.45).

In **McKernan (2013)** we read: …Critical pedagogy is a movement involving relationships of teaching and learning so that students gain a critical selfconsciousness and social awareness and take appropriate action against oppressive forces. This idea is central to Freire's notion of "conscientization" or the coming to personal critical consciousness. According to Herbert Marcuse, a major figure in the Frankfurt school, that there could be no qualitative social change, no socialism, is possible without the emergence of a new rationality and sensibility in the individuals themselves: no radical social change without a radical change of the individual agents of change (Marcuse, 1972)… (McKernan, 2013, p. 425).

PAULO FREIRE AND THE ROLE OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy is a teaching method that aims to help in challenging and actively struggling against any form of social oppression and the related customs and beliefs. It is a form of theory and practice which serves to let pupils gain a critical awareness. Critical pedagogy is a type of pedagogy in which criticism of the established order and social criticism are essential. Critical pedagogy wants to question society in its understanding of the role that education has. From this point of view, social critique is necessary if one does not want an upbringing and education that contributes to the reproduction of inequality.

An important key concept in this is emancipation. It is emancipation, liberation from oppressive social relations, which critical pedagogy is committed to. Social critique leads to social change. With this mode of critique we want students to see clearly that phenomena like inequality are not necessary, but arose in a certain historical context that has been established and produced by man-made social processes. Upon becoming aware of this reality, a person no longer needs to feel like a manipulable object anymore.

According to the critical pedagogy, education is inherently political, and any kind of pedagogy should be aware of this fact. A social and educational vision of justice and equality should be the basis for any kind of education. The liberation from oppression and human suffering should be an important dimension in education.

Education should promote both emancipatory change as well as the cultivation of the intellect. It should be kept in mind that the current education system is a reflection of the interests of the existing system of exploitation. This dynamic must be exposed by critical

pedagogy, understood, after which action should be taken against it to bring social change; a cycle of theory, practice, evaluation and reflection.

Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"

Paulo Freire, a professor of history and philosophy of education at the University of Recife, is the grandfather and one of the major contributors to critical pedagogy. He felt a deep concern for the poor, which influenced his views on education.

He is best known for his book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" in which he described how people have been never learned to think critically about their situation. Most people accept their situation as inevitable and as belonging to life itself. Only when they become aware of their situation and are able to assign meaning to it, a step can be made toward changing the situation.

CRITIQUE OF EDUCATIONAL BANKING

Freire criticized the traditional education method of simply depositing knowledge, or what he called the "banking concept of education"; which only strengthens the established order. Instead of communicating with the students, the teacher gives deposits which the students have to patiently receive. They are not considered as able to do more than to organize and accumulate the deposits.

This "banking" concept is the reflection of the dichotomous oppressive society we live in: the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing, the teacher thinks and the students are being thought, the teacher talks and the students listen obediently. The success of this method depends on the willingness to swallow. Those who are not willing to cram themselves with deposits remain 'undeveloped'.

Freire looked for a method that is conscientizing and thus comes to the basic principle of his educational theory: Education can never be neutral, it is either an instrument of liberation or an instrument of domestication. In the preface of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed:

"There is no neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world."

Freire adds that this does not depend on the content of the education provided, nor the good will of the educator, decisive here is the educational process itself. If the individual does not fight for its interests, and its cultural and social emancipation, it seems that one has lost the love for life. The pedagogy that Freire proposes is the opposite of that described above. It suggests that the individual has a love for life, teaches a cultivation of being - by being in the world, not of or under the world - a condition brought about by liberation. This necessitates a kind of education that is not alienating and mechanistic. Education that

liberates the individual must be a conscious act in which the content is understood and analyzed, with the dialogue between the students and the teacher, it should negate the unidirectional (coming from one side) relationship to replace it with bidirectionality (coming from both sides) to contribute to the education of both parties, because both have the elements to offer each other insights. The teacher is hereby turned into the pupil of his own pupils. "Nobody educates anybody else, nobody educates himself, people educate each other through their interactions of the world."

DIALOGUE IN CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

To bring the awareness process in motion there must be dialogue, because man does not create oneself in silence, but by words, actions and reflection. The use of such a dialogue is the main element in the learning process.

Dialogue can only happen by the speaking of "own words" with which the individual reflects its reality, it is the only way to get the understanding of this reality and change it. In opposition to the depository education system that maintains the system, Freire proposes the problematizing education with consciëntisering (coming to consciousness) as a goal. Learning is not 'eating' of false words, it is not programming, learning problematizing by raising questions. The subject matter is the life situation of the pupil.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN THE CLASS

Educators on all levels should ask themselves if their assignment is only transferring knowledge to their pupils/students. Only training the labour force that will engage in material and service production? The answer to these questions could be a dividing line between traditional and critical pedagogy. The former may conclude that there is nothing more than knowledge transfer and skills training that are parts of an educator's assignment and role. The later will recognize something more that belongs to its assignment (Giroux & Giroux, 2006).

Following few strategies can be adopted to implement bcritical pedagogy in the classroom:

- Teachers must show respect towards their students and welcome their ideas.
- Produce democratic environment in the classroom, where the students feel free to ask any question and put forward their opinion.
- Not mere transmit or deposit the knowledge in the mind of learners rather indulge in some sort of healthy discussion.
- Indulge in some kind of small researches or project work with the students based on academics, social and political consequences.
- Create a classroom where the teachers and students try to understand and learn from each other.
- In addition to the subject content the students are helped to understand the working mechanism of the society. They should be helped to get the general idea of historical,

social, political and economical mechanisms. Depending on the level of education they should be motivated to critically review these mechanisms to be able to critically reflect on them.

- Open ended questions can be given to the students so that to develop critical thinking on them.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING CRITICAL PEDAGOGY:

- Not having clear model for implementation of this pedagogy in the class.
- Its abstract nature not much practical application ie in day to day life.
- It mainly focuses on a macro level system critic than engaging in an action at a micro level in a classroom reality.
- Teachers are not well versed with the concept itself and also not well prepared to use critical pedagogy.
- Also difficult to implement due to examination ridden education system.
- Impossible to cover the syllabus within the given time period.
- Over crowded classrooms.

CONCLUSION

Irrespective of certain criticism and challenges faced by critical pedagogy there is a lots of potential in it to make the teaching - learning active and interactive process and transform the students from being a passive listener to active participant thus make the teaching learning process more effective and fruitful. The individual is made so conscious that he or she adapt to the environment completely and make the changes as per the necessity. It is one of the important tool in the hands of educators to use in the classroom and bring the desired changes for the welfare of society.

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Fostering an Inclusive Classroom in the Online Mode of Education

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ABSTRACT

The unforeseen shift towards the digital mode of education is a new concept for many and has been proved fragmentary for some. It is also like a blessing in disguise and a more contemporary way of the teaching- learning process. But the question is, that does the constantly evolving nature of education, foster an inclusive classroom? Inclusion is a way of thinking, more like a mindset and a right for all, that each and every being deserves. Fostering an inclusive virtual classroom is the need of the hour and it has already been adopted in some virtual classrooms. What measures can be taken up as an educator at the personal or institutional level need to be worked upon. Teaching online during the pandemic is like a total transformation of the whole process of learning and teaching. The students and the teachers are steadily trying to adapt to the same. In India, most of the teachers were habitual of the 'blackboard' method of teaching, but the digital mode of teaching has opened the windows to more useful and creative methods of teaching, keeping in mind the individual differences. Many people belonging from the disadvantaged sections of the society do not have a proper access to the technology, equipment like a smart phone or a personal computer, not even a private/personal space in the house. Many of the teachers are not trained in teaching in the digital mode. Teaching and learning from home have its own challenges. Teachers who have kids at home are finding it challenging to have a balanced work life at home. Those who are differently abled also require a basic equipment for the same to overcome the challenges faced by digital mode.

Keywords: Fostering inclusive virtual classroom, Digital education, Inclusive education, Online teaching-learning, Measures for inclusion, Individual differences, Accessibility, Belongingness, Training, ADHD, Partial visual impairment, Talking books.

1. INTRODUCTION

The unanticipated shift in the mode of education has been proved as a blessing in disguise but has also been challenging for many. It is a very challenging task to create a space for each and every student in the virtual classrooms, to understand and acknowledge individual differences, to make sure each student has the equipment to attend online classes. Although the digital mode of education has been an adaptive process throughout, but it has also increased the gap between the haves and have nots. It can also be said that the marginalized community has been the worst affected in terms of income, online education and many other factors. But the government and many NGOs have been constantly trying to make various equipment, internet connection available at the grassroot level. Talking about those who are differently abled, they are also being provided with basic equipment that suits their requirements and needs. Yes, there is still a room for improvement and many still do not have an access to the basic equipment or even a stable internet connection. Hence, we can say that education is a constantly evolving process, but a very basic need that every human deserves and should have an equal access to the same. This paper focuses on the challenges during the online classes that were faced by the teachers, the marginalized community, the ones who are differently abled and what were the solutions (if any) to the same and how the digital mode of education is fostering an inclusive virtual classroom.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- To understand the challenges faced by the teachers, marginalized community students, those with special needs, etc.
- How can a teacher provide a sense of belongingness, create a space for all in the virtual classrooms?
- What is being done at the grassroot level to provide basic equipment to those in need.
- Technology for fostering an inclusive classroom.
- To accept and understand the advantages of the digital mode of education.
- To understand that adapting to one's environment and adjusting to the same is done according to an individual's own pace.

1.2 WHAT IS INCLUSION?

Inclusion is seen as a universal human right. It aims at embracing all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, medical or other needs. It is all about including and not excluding anyone, giving equal opportunities and getting rid of discrimination and intolerance. Removal of all barriers. We can say that inclusion is valuing everyone, respecting diversity and individuality, changing the way things are organized so that they suit the pupil needs, providing flexible learning, not just about access, and hence, its more than a policy. Talking about inclusive education,

- Equal access to education is a matter of right and not a privilege.

- Individual differences do not mean deficits or deficiencies, even the differently abled are natural differences that need to be acknowledged.
- Diversity, individuality are rich sources of inspiration to learn together, learn from each other.
- One of the most important aspect is to break the barriers and stereotypes.

All adults and children are a part of one social system and every person is unique, special in one or the other way and deserves to be valued equally. Cognitive development is just one dimension of education. The virtual basis of education are A, B, and C: Acceptance, Belongingness and Community. Inclusive education is a continuous process, not a product, hence the constant evolving nature of education makes it contemporary, flexible in nature.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative study to understand the experiences of teachers and students in terms of online mode of education. This study would help us to gain an insight of virtual classrooms, understand the existing problems and various solutions to the same. This study might help us understand the nature of the challenges faced by the students belonging to the marginalized sections and also about those with special needs. Various solutions have been proposed and what all solutions have actually been implemented have been enlisted.

2.1 PARTICIPANTS

There are total five participants in the study, four are the students of the upper primary classes, and are twelve to fourteen years in age, one of the participants is a special educator of a renowned school. It must be noted that full consent was taken from the participants before the study. The research plan, including objectives, the purpose of research, observation schedule, and the participant's role in the research, was well communicated to all the participants.

Keeping the identities of the participants anonymous, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 have been used in the following sections. P1 is a special educator in one of the renowned schools of Gurugram and has been actively involved in this profession for the past four years. P2 is a student of the same school where P1 is an educator, he is twelve years old and studies in grade 6 and an active student, and loves writing poems, stories etc. P3 is a student of the same school, she is thirteen years old and in grade 6 as P1 and P2 and has a visual impairment, is partially sighted in the left eye. She loves playing the piano and wants to learn it professionally. P4 is associated with a renowned NGO, she is 14 years old and in grade 6, she belongs the lower income group, she is an active listener and loves painting. P5 is also associated with the same NGO, he is thirteen years old and is suffering from ADHD, he gets bored if asked to follow a routine.

2.2 DATA COLLECTION

All the data that was collected, was collected through personal telephonic interviews with the participants and also the parents/mentors/guardians on the behalf of the participants.

The interview was entirely conducted through calls, and not physically, keeping in mind the Covid Guidelines. It's important to state that the identities of all the participants have been kept anonymous and the interview was conducted with their full consent.

The data collected is totally collected from/for/in respect to virtual classrooms and the digital mode of education and is limited to the pandemic times only, nothing is in regard to pre/post pandemic.

This data is strictly based on the individualized perception and its all about the challenges and solutions of the participants at their personal/institutional level.

3. FINDINGS

This study aims at understanding the challenges faced by the teachers and the students during online classes and the teaching learning activities. Some students and teachers are happy with the current scenario of the digital mode of education, while some are not. One of the most important qualities it gave us all are "the quality of adapting, facing challenges, learning from them and adjustment."

The main aim of this study is to understand the experiences, challenges of all the participants involved in this study.

Starting with P1-

P1 is a special educator in one of the renowned schools of Gurugram and has been actively involved in this profession for the past four years. She has been actively involved in counselling and guiding students of K-12. She is also associated with an NGO and helps the people who belong to the financially backward sections of the society and those with special needs to get a scholarship and admission in the school she is working with. Being empathetic in nature, she understands each and every student, acknowledges each one of them and accepts individual differences. She also believes in conducting weekly sessions for all the students on various topics like mental health, life skills, etc. and sessions every alternate day for those who have special needs.

After conducting a telephonic interview, we got an insight as to what challenges she faced while teaching online, what are the advantages of the digital mode of education and according to her how can a teacher or an educator foster an inclusive virtual classroom. One of the most major challenge according to her is "the lack of training is making the digital mode of education very difficult and cumbersome, all the educators and students need to be trained and need to be made aware of the various technological changes, their uses etc." She felt that one of the most common reason for lack of training is "the lack of readiness" and such a sudden shift was actually like a blessing in disguise and if there were no such mode or technology, many would have been deprived of education and teaching. Another major challenge according to her was "the lack of equipment, proper studying space, a stable internet connection.", these are the basic requirements for an online class. She also felt that it was difficult to keep students engaged and active throughout, but for that she

used various tools and techniques and had to modify and keep changing her teaching styles, "for me it was difficult to gather students as one class, since everyone has different opinions, I gave equal opportunities to all, now we all are adapting to the changes, it's getting better day by day." Initially she felt there were some security issues as well but now she feels that online mode is more flexible, it helps students learn according to their own pace, allows them to be in their comfort zone, which is also a disadvantage. Students are not being able to interact with their peer group, go out to play, which makes them vulnerable. Because of staying home, the whole time, it has encouraged them to misuse the technology and their screen time has also increased. The increase in the screen time of teachers has restricted them to do other household duties or daily chores and it has led to a packed daily routine. Her idea of fostering an inclusive virtual classroom will be discussed under the heading '3.1'.

P2-

P2 is a twelve-year-old and studies in grade 6 of a renowned school in Gurugram, he is overall an active student and an aspiring writer. He really enjoys interacting with his peer group and has a spirited nature. One of the most challenging situations for him is "I am not able to meet my fellow mates and I feel that I have nothing to do in my free time, but I am exploring myself and working on my writing skills." When asked about his feelings regarding online classes, "I feel that online classes aren't much engaging and interactive, sometimes we face a lot of connectivity issues and sometimes we miss the days when we used to go for physical classes." He also felt that all students are being acknowledged and more of co-curricular activities are being conducted apart from sports. He is getting numerous opportunities as a member of the editorial board and he is also learning new things, he is getting to know about his own strengths and weaknesses.

P3-

P3 is a thirteen-year-old and studies in grade 6 of a renowned school in Gurugram. She is a kind hearted girl and wants to become a pianist. She is partially sighted from the left eye, but she is a very strong-willed girl. She is an active listener and loves studying, she has a special interest in literature and piano. Initially when the classes were held in the physical mode, she used to learn through a variety of means, including Braille, screen reading software, which provides speech-based feedback with a synthesized voice, reading items displayed on a computer, phone, or tablet screen, audio books and talking books, and used to spend a lot of time of her day in the music room. After asking her about the challenges she faced during the digital mode of education she said, "I did not face or feel much difference and I thank my school and my family for all the equipment and technology they have provided me with. The technology and usage are pretty much the same, yes I did face connectivity issues though, I attended regular classes with all my classmates." She further said that one of the disadvantages for her "is that I am not able to practice playing the piano and I really want to go back, since I don't have that instrument, I always feel that there is

something missing." She also said that she is tensed for the students who are partially sighted and belong to the lower income group and do not have an access to support them or enable them to read and write, she feels bad for them and wants to support them. She wants to run an NGO in the future and for the time being she wants to help such students because, according to her "every individual matters and every individual has something or the other to contribute to the world but lack support and enough opportunities."

P4-

P4 is associated with a renowned NGO, she is 14 years old and in grade 6, she belongs the lower income group, she is an active listener and loves painting. She isn't privileged enough to have her own smart phone, and has two more siblings who have to attend online classes but they all had only one smart phone, all three siblings were in a dilemma, but an NGO approached them and provided them with smart phones free of cost and they also helped them get enrolled in a private school which do not ask for fees. She is very happy to be a part of such school and finds herself lucky enough to get such an opportunity. She feels it was a rare opportunity and now wants to make a full use of it. She has a very creative mind and she has an amazing art collection, everything made of waste and upcycling. The challenges she faced while attending online classes were, "I was clueless as to how to use Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc. it was a very difficult task for me, my mother leaves the house early morning for work and being the elder sibling, I have to take care of the household chores also." She found managing time a difficult task and one of the major challenges was unstable internet connection, no proper studying space, etc. "All the three siblings sit in the same room to attend online classes; we don't have a Wi-Fi and have to use mobile data." She felt that online classes and managing time are very tough, she also doesn't get time to follow her hobbies etc. and feels that online classes are like a burden.

P5–

P5 is associated with an NGO, he is thirteen years old and studies in grade 5 and is suffering from ADHD, he finds it difficult to follow a routine. He always feels that he has a list of tasks assigned and isn't able to meet the deadlines. He feels comfortable at home and he feels that the flexible nature of the digital mode of education, "I feel comfortable in attending online classes and I feel I can do things at my own pace." He was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 10, when his parents used to receive a feedback from the teachers saying that he is 'problematic' and is performing poorly. He was asked to change his school and from then he is associated with the current NGO. His parents are happy to be a part of the same. In school, teachers used to pay proper attention, used color coding, assigned tasks in small segments and used various other measures, which aren't being adopted in the virtual mode. Although he feels happy at home, but his parents are worried about him. He is attracted to crayons and colors and is good at painting, but he doesn't have the attention span and can't stay focused to complete any art work. He has been attending art therapy sessions through the digital mode, which is actually making a difference in his attention span.

3.1 FOSTERING AN INCLUSIVE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

The concept of inclusive classrooms has widely been accepted and individual differences are still being recognized. It was a difficult task to make people understand and it is still not accepted worldwide, many stereotypes still persist. Students are usually associated with NGOs and schools and schools provide them with the full equipment and technology according to their needs. Some of those who belong to a lower income group suffer a lot and have suffered a lot during the pandemic times. Those who cannot afford smart devices or a stable internet connection were totally cut off from education and many other areas like a mere ration delivery. P1(a special educator) of this study has given some ideas and measures in order to foster inclusion in virtual classrooms:

- Acknowledge each and every student, understand individual differences and treat everyone equally. One of the most important aspect is to create a welcoming environment. One can introduce a certain code of conduct or associate an emoji or 'raise hand' for speaking or if some student wants to say or ask something, with all these small rules, the decorum of a classroom is maintained.
- Teachers can start their classes with a casual greeting or asking if everyone is doing good, this creates a welcoming atmosphere. Teachers can also keep the last 10 minutes of the class for discussion, wherein all the students get an opportunity to speak.
- The teachers can use various apps, games etc. to make their classes more interactive and engaging for all. Some examples can be GoNoodle, Nearpod, etc.
- Do not judge the students on the basis of their marks, one can be good in areas other than academics. We as teachers are still learning, there is a very famous saying by Albert Einstein, "Once you stop learning, you start dying."
- Do not find flaws, encourage all the students and you can add "we will do it together and get better by practicing and working hard the next time." Motivating the students creates a zest in them for learning and achieving and motivating all the students is very important.
- If a student is a slow learner, divide the concepts into segments, and plan your lessons according to the level of average learners, give a little extra time to slow learners and allow them to learn at their own pace.
- Encourage each student to participate and do not be angry if the student says the wrong answer, everyone makes mistakes and they can be corrected. Do not force students to answer or do something that they do not want to, yes, sometimes it is necessary to insist them.
- Create a comfortable environment, sometimes things do not go as predicted but for that we can also say that discomfort is where learning happens. We learn something new every day and every moment,

- Always think of the positive aspect of everything, create a happy environment, respect everyone's opinions. Even if some technical error happens or if you do not know how to do a certain task using the technology, there is no harm in asking someone.
- Try new teaching methods or ways, such as flip classroom, storytelling methods, organize online co- curricular activities, encourage participation, help students to explore their own selves, their strengths and weaknesses.

3.2 CHALLENGES OF ONLINE CLASSES

The online/digital mode of education is still in process and it is being evolved with the changing times. Zoom and other apps were there during the pre-pandemic times, but now a lot of new apps and technologies have come up, with a variety of tools and techniques to compete with physical classes. It's a revelation for us to see so many features and techniques, but at the same time it's difficult for us all to understand their uses and the process of use. That is where the most challenging part begins. The challenges faced by the participants of this study in particular are-

- One of the major challenges each participant faced was the lack of training, computer literacy and preparedness. No one was prepared for such a major change in their lifestyles. It took them some time to understand the various tools and techniques. The teachers felt that the flow of the classes isn't maintained or it is difficult to maintain, students keep getting disconnected.
- Everything is new in terms of the daily routine, no black-board, chalk and duster style of teaching, the students are able to adapt to these changes at a different pace.
- Lack of equipment and an unstable internet connection makes it cumbersome or sometimes impossible to attend online classes. The pandemic has increased the gaps between the haves and have nots.
- Not as effective as the physical mode, students and teachers don't find the digital mode of education interactive, and sometimes they feel it is boring, since students aren't able to look at the things from a practical point of view.
- Increased screen time has led to severe headaches and also a misuse of technology. Students aren't able to go out to play, they indulge themselves in online games and movies and often misuse the technology they have been given an access to.
- Difficulty for those having visual/hearing impairment, because the technology and devices are provided to them by the school and they might not be able to adjust with it at their home.
- Not as engaging and interactive as the physical mode, monotonous for students and teachers. Some students aren't able to express themselves freely as they used to do during the physical classes.
- Lack of security and no data privacy is one of the major concerns of every teacher and student in terms of cybercrime, hacking viruses, etc. many bank frauds have also taken place when students/teachers clicked on random links.

- Assessment and lack of fair means of examination is a major setback, even evaluation is a matter of concern. Tests and exams are being held online which increases the chance of using unfair means. Also, students are being evaluated in terms of participation in class, but not all the students are able to express themselves in the virtual classrooms.
- No social interaction, physical activities and isolation, "This rather psychological factor is still highly affecting students' motivation and learning progress. Being in the classroom, students got used to instant eye-to-eye communication with each other allowing reacting together, sharing the experience, joking, & making a non-verbal contact, strengthening the social skills."

3.3 ADVANTAGES OF THE DIGITAL MODE OF EDUCATION

Every coin has two sides and we cannot say that everything has only a positive or only a negative aspect. The unforeseen shift in the mode of education has been very useful and like a blessing in disguise. No one saw this coming and no one had actually thought of the benefits or advantages of virtual classrooms. Yes, it has been a socially challenging situation and students and teachers weren't able to connect with their social groups physically. But we can say that mental health is being given a lot of importance and is being taken seriously without judging other people. Some teachers are still learning and all in all it is helping in their growth as an individual. The advantageous sides of the digital mode of education can be-

- It helps students to learn at their own pace. It helps them create a comfortable environment or we can say that they can attend classes at the ease of their comfort.
- This mode is flexible and not too rigid, it focuses on the growth of an individual and it is not only focused on academics.
- One of the most advantageous part is that classes can be attended anywhere, and if recorded, they can be attended anytime.
- One can create his own customized learning environment.
- It helps in saving time which is consumed in travelling from home to the institution, and also saves other resources like electricity.
- It is usually student centered. Students being the prime focus of the teachers learn actively and the learning is often made engaging and interactive.
- It helps us to be aware of new tools and techniques and helps us understand the constant evolving nature of education.
- It helps us learn and acquire new skills, we get to know more about our strengths and weaknesses.

These were some of the advantages of online learning keeping in mind the participants of this study. No system is perfect and we can say that perfection is gained through experience and adjustment, there is no denial that it takes time for everyone to adapt to their own surroundings, and that too is according to one's own pace.

4. CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude this study with a very famous saying by Albert Einstein, "Once you stop learning, you start dying." And I feel that during the pandemic times we all have adapted to and are still adapting to sudden changes. Yes, this process is varying from person to person. We all learn something new everyday and we have learnt a lot during this time. This mode of education has also brought with it various advancement like courses in the blended mode, various apps and new features like a 'digital whiteboard', apps like 'Nearpod' for designing interactive games and quizzes. New methods have also been adopted by teachers to make their lessons engaging. Some people still lack access to basic equipment and this should further be looked upon and implemented by the authorities at the grassroot level. Every coin has two sides and there are pros and cons of everything, if the challenges were overcome and we got a solution through them it means that we as individuals are learning to adjust to our surroundings. No doubt, there are various advantages of the digital mode of education too. The digital mode of education has brought with itself a lot of changes that were very much required and were being neglected earlier. Yes, many people have faced a lot of problems and they are still being faced, but that is what life is all about, overcoming challenges. Learning is all about finding the abilities and not listing the disabilities, hence, adjustment is the key to an effective learning. There is still no comparison between the physical mode of education and the digital mode of education, both are equally effective in their own ways. Education mode is all about 'what suits the time or the current scenario' and there is no doubt that the digital mode of education really came as a blessing in disguise.

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