

# FACTORY MODEL OF LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY'S FUTURE(STUDENTS)?

**Prof. Kishore Kumar**

Asst. Prof. in Functional English  
Sikh National College, Banga, SBS Nagar, Punjab  
(affiliated to GNDU, Amritsar)  
Email Id- kumarkishor645@gmail.com

## Abstract

*This paper attempts to explore the evolving needs of today's students in the rapidly transforming world. The researcher has tried to do a comparative analysis of the scenarios of Industrial and Information Age. Between these two periods of more than a century, the social structure has changed a lot, but the education system seems to be 30-40 years behind. Hence, the students are still being taught according to the Industrial Age Values of mass production and mass control. Thus, the need of the hour is immediate revamp in the education system of India, which is undergoing more of a quantitative, rather than a qualitative change. The paper also highlights the need of taking students as individuals rather than as units of production. The traditional methods of teaching should be replaced by modern techniques involving technology. For this purpose, teachers also need to keep themselves updated for the harmonious development of their pupils in the tech-savvy times. The researcher posits that the students should be given some autonomy for choosing the type of curriculum they want for themselves. A few methods like Montessori, Waldorf etc. are also suggested to be taken into consideration for better and effective teaching-learning process.*

**Keywords:** Information Age, revamp, harmonious, tech-savvy, autonomy etc.

## INTRODUCTION

We are living in information-driven society. With the regular advancement in technology, the digital communication is occurring at a brisk pace. The post-millennial generation has become so much tech-savvy like never before. After the advent of Covid-19, this trend has surged higher than ever. The reliance on digital devices is exceedingly high these days. The exposition of online for education exposed so many flaws in the current educational set up, and imposed a few challenges the society is bound to confront. As the students are communicating more and more through technological devices. Today's educators are facing a challenge to cater to the learning styles of the students. Even though, the challenges in Education sector are aplenty, but possibilities are also endless. Ever since the era of Industrialization, the times have changed immensely. The social fabric has also changed. But our education system hasn't changed in accordance with the change in time and society. We have entered the advance stages of Information Era, but our education system is rigidly following the factory model of learning which is becoming obsolete and age-old in today's skill-based 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is often sarcastically remarked about Indian Education System that it lacks two things, i.e. Education and System. The students are being taught as they have been taught throughout the past decades. Education and awareness are two key factors to solve any problem whatsoever. Only educated and well-aware individuals can survive in today's world. Learning never stops. It goes from cradle to grave. With the help of quality education, the individuals and society can become better.

## FACTORY MODEL OF LEARNING

A century ago, the factory model of education was being perpetuated. This model was used in industrial times to fulfil the needs of those times. The students used to be prepared to become clerks in factories. Even after going from "Industrial Age" to "Post-modern Age", the education system is more or less the same or it functions on the same traditional lines. A practitioner of this model, Ellwood Cubberly, once famously stated:-

"Our schools are in a sense factories in which the raw product(students) are to be shaped and fashion into products to meet the various demands of life."

But these are the gone-by times and the society has come a long way. Its needs and demands are different and unique than they were in industrial times. As we know that education plays a pivotal role in changing the way the citizens of a country function as 21<sup>st</sup> century workers. In the dynamically evolving world after the spread of globalisation, the social structures and economies are being upgraded. So, the call of the times is a profound transformation in the current educational set up, its approaches, learning culture etc.

### UTILITARIAN VIEW OF EDUCATION-

During the industrial age, Education was thought to be based on utilitarian model. According to this model, education's prime aim should be the production of students who are able to fit into society's structure to become productive and successful citizens. The primary focus is not to identify and hone the talents and skills of the individuals, but to test the memorised information and retention power of the students. In English literature, a famous Dickensian character, called Thomas Gradgrind, in Dickens' novel 'Hard Times', propagated this view of education. The sheer mechanisation of human beings is perfectly highlighted by the author. According to his philosophy of education, the children must be taught to memorize "facts" and forbidden to fancy anything. That's the system Gradgrind wanted the schoolmaster to implement in the school. He opines:-

"Now, what I want is, Facts.

Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts.

Facts alone are wanted in life.

Plant nothing else, and root out everything else."

Gradgrind not just forcibly implemented the fact-based learning on the students studying in his school, but he also made his own children go through the same monotonous system of learning. In the end of the story, he realised his fault in imposing his philosophy of education on majority of children. That kind of system didn't have a place for imagination, nursery rhymes or out of the box thinking. The role of emotions and imagination in the harmonious development of a person was thwarted.

The memorization of facts has been a major aspect, rather a major drawback in the effective teaching and learning process. Even in today's postmodern world, teachers are forced to make students do rote learning of the concepts, due to which students clearly lack the requisite critical thinking ability.

### DRAWBACKS OF TRADITIONAL LEARNING METHODS

The old-fashioned approaches in teaching-learning process are no longer relevant in today's age and time, but the teacher-centred methods have still being widely practised even after knowing that the students and their needs change with the passage of time. A few shortcomings of these methods are mentioned below:-

1. Lack of critical thinking among students.
2. Anxiety, stress and depression among students because of the pressure of earning good grades.
3. Lack of focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
4. Lack of practical knowledge.
5. Uninteresting teaching-learning process.
6. Lack of funds and quality educators.
7. Pouring of facts into learner's mind resulting in mechanical learning.
8. Overburdened educators and learners.
9. Less focus on creativity.
10. Teachers acting as sages who can instil knowledge in pupils' minds.
11. Faulty learning methods.
12. Emphasis on rote learning and memorization of the facts.
13. Schools are working as factories.

The aforementioned points present the dilapidated state our education system is in. Of course, there is an urgent need of reformation in many areas of the system.

### DELHI MODEL OF EDUCATION- FIRST STEP TOWARDS CHANGE

The Delhi government has carefully tried to redesign and restructure education. This has been one of their topmost priorities. The initiative has also garnered appreciation and applause around the world. It also seems as if the seeds of reformation in education have been sown. The Education model of Delhi gives glimpses of a much needed transformation. This model not only prioritizes the restructuring of school infrastructure, but also the training of teachers and principals, community engagement, revamp of curriculum etc. Moreover, this approach also includes the incorporation of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as promotion of problem solving ability, entrepreneurship and aptitude enhancement activities. The innovative and creative teaching strategies help the students enjoy and comprehend what they learn.

After the success of this model in Delhi, various other state governments have announced the adoption of the same approach to enhance the quality of education in their states. The Maharashtra Chief Minister Ajit Pawar called the Delhi school model "the best in the country".

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF PROMINENT EDUCATORS

There are a few schools of thought which align with the required skill sets 21<sup>st</sup> century model of learning. Some progressive thinkers have proposed their thoughts on making education effective by allowing students to actively take part in their learning and making the environment conducive and liberal for the learners. The thought provoking ideas given by these thinkers are mentioned ahead:-

#### 1) JOHN DEWEY AND PROGRESSIVISM

American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859-1952) has been one of the most well-known education reformers worldwide. He held a viewpoint that Education is

“a participation of the individual

In the social consciousness of the race.”

Dewey’s philosophy of education gets recalled time and again for his ideas and perspectives were way ahead of their times and are still relevant today. Much like other progressive thinkers, he also vehemently asserted the idea of ‘learning by doing’. He states:-

“I believe that education, therefore, is a process

Of living and not a preparation for future living.”

He gave away his whole life to the improvement of education system of his times. His Positivist theory focused individuality, change and progress as necessary tools to receive education. It is completely based on the needs, interest and experiences of the learners. The cooperative learning strategies are mostly used to achieve the goals. Dewey emphasised the importance of teaching students with new methods or approaches rather than the traditionally used ones. He once remarked-

“If we teach today as we taught yesterday,

We rob our children of tomorrow.”

Today’s student is tomorrow’s future. Students must not be snubbed for being creative or for asking ‘out of the box’ questions. It is society’s collective failure if the students aren’t served as per their needs.

**2) MARIA MONTESSORI’S SCHOOL OF THOUGHT-** Montessori School of education is based on the principals laid down by Maria Montessori (1870-1952). She opened her first school for children belonging to low-income workers in an apartment building in Rome in 1907. The school was called “Home for Children”. She understood by her observation that students learn better through sensory experience and by working independently, children seemed to have new levels of autonomy and learn through self-motivation. She began looking at teacher’s role as a facilitator by letting students do whatever they want in a limited but a prepared environment. Soon after, she and her ideas ventured out in the world to inspire educators to make a difference in the lives of young individuals. Once, Maria Montessori stated the importance of autonomy to the young ones by saying:-

“Never help a child with a task

At which he feels he can succeed.”

This school of thought focuses on children who construct their personality as educated, adaptable, independent citizens. It has everything that is required in 21<sup>st</sup> century’s skills based digitally equipped environment. It is completely a child-centred approach. The four C’s have been emphasised for the learners to fulfil their needs in future. They are:-

- a) Critical Thinking
- b) Collaboration
- c) Creativity
- d) Communication

### **3) WALDORF SCHOOL METHOD**

The Waldorf Education is based on the principles laid down by Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian educator and philosopher. This school of thought focuses on a child’s holistic development. The marketing director at San Francisco, Samantha Cosentino assured about the system in an email mentioned below:-

“The Waldorf classroom is a safe space where faculty and staff honor the innocence and imagination of early childhood...”

This model of education believes in introducing certain subjects at different phases. The primary lessons are added with creative arts. The ‘learning by doing’ approach is followed in Waldorf schools. The students are assessed in a comprehensive manner and engaged in conferences and classroom activities.

### **4) JOHN LOCKE AND TABULA RASA**

A British educational philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) has been one of the greatest figures known for his valuable contribution in the enhancement and development of Educational Philosophy. His pioneer contribution is the theory called ‘Tabula Rasa’ (blank slate) which states that humans are born without any in-built knowledge and they acquire knowledge from experience or perception. This theory is in stark contrast to the innate theory which is firm on the idea that human brain is possessed with knowledge before birth. This concept can become the basis for improvement in education reforms in elementary classes when a child’s mind can be shaped in the best possible manner. This empirical theory can be applied to spark creativity and use imagination of an individual for innovative practises needed for the betterment of society. The young minds are like clay which can be mould to give it a proper shape. They can be made into good and better human beings through ideal and quality education.

## ROLE OF EDUCATORS

In these testing times, the educator's roles and responsibilities have become crucial once again. They have always been harbingers of radical transformation. The following are the strategies the 21<sup>st</sup> century educators should adopt to bring a few necessary reforms in the educational domain:-

1. Re-plan, rethink and restructure the curriculum- 21st century educators must engage themselves in the curriculum development process by planning the way our curriculum should be followed to adapt to the changing needs of today's learners. The curriculum can be restructured by making some objectives a part of the teaching-learning process for getting the productive outcomes from the learners.
2. Seek input from students to bring about a change in curriculum- Students should also have their say in curriculum development. They should be given the opportunity to design the kind of curriculum they want for themselves. An American educational philosopher namely Theodore Burghard Hurt Brameld(1904-1987) wanted the schools to aid young minds develop themselves socially and also take part and social planning as well. He advocated that learners be assured of the validity and urgency of the change by following democratic procedures. He envisioned that education begets a new social order where the demands of the pupils can be met by a remodelled education.
3. Let the students take control over their learning and act as a facilitator- Another role that is expected from today's teachers is to give the students a perfect space and charge to make the learning happen by being facilitators to their activities. However, it doesn't lessen the work or responsibility of the teacher. Rather, it induces the teacher to try and design the lecture for effective learning and proper classroom management.
4. Include 21<sup>st</sup> century life skills into the lesson plans- Teachers as true educators can't just use traditional approaches that have been teacher centric and never allowed the learners to actively participate in effective learning. They must try to make necessary changes to adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills laid down to cope up with the present and the uncertain future.
5. Make the learning student-centric- As discussed earlier, the teacher has to avoid being the focal point of the class and tries to do everything possible to put students in certain situations and let them decide how they want to learn by being actively functional in the classroom. After all, the students need the knowledge and skills required to function better in society. Rather than just lecturing the students, teachers should allow them to take the centre stage and make learning easy and accessible for themselves.
6. Give emotional support to the students if need be- Today's learner needs emotional care as well. Students in these times are going through tough situations which aren't really easy to cope up with. So, there's a great need for today's educators to become mental and emotional support to their learners. Talking about the essential requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century, Karen Armstrong rightly remarks:-  
"If we want to create a viable, peaceful world,  
we've got to integrate compassion into  
the gritty realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century life."
7. Use technology for effective learning- In today's tech-savvy times, the use of technology can massively aid teachers in creating an atmosphere for sensory experience that can make learning a life-long and a pleasurable experience. With the inclusion to technology in the classroom, so many possibilities can be explored for better learning. Using smart classes, computers, and other technological devices can make students learn faster and interesting.
8. Promote collaboration and communication among students- Today's teachers must give students a platform so that they can express themselves and learn through collaboration with other students. They can communicate with each other and improve themselves in communication skills. By allowing students take part in the learning process, teachers can indirectly instil the values in students which can make them better citizens.
9. Focus on creativity and innovation- The students must be allowed to make mistakes while learning which can spur their imagination and become instrumental in their learning. If the students find themselves free to imagine and create something new, this might result in sharpening their innovative and entrepreneurial skills. So, they should be provided a conducive and congenial environment to thrive and survive in the uncertain future.
10. Make learning interesting and worthwhile- The teachers are the ones who can make learning boring or interesting. They can plan the teaching-learning process in a way that students feel the urge to perform to their fullest potential. They should no longer feel the classroom as a boring place with nothing to do. They should be given the experience they always wanted to boost their confidence and improve them.
11. Future oriented pedagogy- The pedagogy adopted by the teachers must be future oriented. The skills students learn today are something they are going to apply in future. In order to tackle the real life challenges of the future, they need to be equipped with the handy skills required for their survival hereafter.
12. Introduce new methods for effective learning- To make the learning effective and enjoyable, the teachers need to explore and come up with novel methods of teaching which can make the learning a unique experience. The teaching methods can be decisive in the producing effective learning outcomes.
13. Provide guidance and counselling to the students for career enhancement- The indispensable role teachers need to provide the young minds is proper guidance and counselling to give a proper direction to their

lives and careers. In order to be successful in life, students need to channelize their energy in a direction shown by someone who has the knowledge about the avenues where one can make a successful career.

## CONCLUSION

In the dynamically evolving 21<sup>st</sup> century, the role of education, educators and educational approaches is critical to making the learning happen. There is an urgent need to make learning accessible and effective. The young minds need the updated and pragmatic approach to curb the stagnation and boredom in teaching-learning process. With the incorporation of creative and interesting methods and techniques in the curriculum the learner can make the best use of the resources to make a difference in the world around.

## REFERENCES

- [1] <https://iaswece.org/waldorf-education/what-is-waldorf-education/>
- [2] <http://hackeducation.com/2015/04/25/factory-model>
- [3] <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-delhi-model-of-education/article30796187.ece/amp/>
- [4] <https://longviewoneducation.org/are-we-robbing-students-of-tomorrow/>
- [5] <https://www.verywellmind.com/john-dewey-biography-1859-1952-2795515>
- [6] <https://countercurrents.org/2019/02/john-dewey-in-the-21st-century-philosopher-and-educational-reformer/>
- [7] <https://montessoriacademy.com.au/montessori-an-education-for-the-21st-century-four-c-of-success/>
- [8] <http://www2.southeastern.edu/Academics/Faculty/nadams/educ692/Brameld.html>