



NEW AGE PEDAGOGY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TEACHERS

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Abstract

Pedagogy is a science and an art of teaching. It is changing with changing time. Teaching fraternity is always using different teaching – learning strategies. But in wake of current changes taking place in the world around, teacher will have to employ new and diversified methods and even combining two or three for attaining educational objectives. Constructivism is a learner-centered approach and emphasizes construction of knowledge by the students. It also requires creating interactive learning environment. This paper is about new age pedagogy which will facilitate in tapping the latest technologies to face the challenges of the dynamic world and forward some recommendations for shaping future classrooms.

Keywords: *New age Pedagogy, Challenges, Opportunities for teachers*



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Introduction: Swami Vivekananda opined, “Education is a ‘Man – Making’ process, it should develop character, spirituality and physique”. The aim of education is all round development. Educating a child is directing all the efforts towards developing his physical, mental and emotional capacities. Education system must incorporate different methods and techniques to bring about all round development of child. Since ages India is known for her knowledge and education system in the world. It is claimed to be one of the best system in ancient period with world famous Universities like Nalanda and Takshashila etc. In present era also it is providing skilled human resources to the world. The education round the world is experiencing many upheavals. It is entering a phase where everything is rapidly changing. Things get changed in no

time. Education is facing the challenges posed by globalization and technological advancements. As Indian education is also a part of this mega event it has to gear itself for the change. This paper is about new age pedagogy which will facilitate in tapping the latest technologies to face the challenges of the dynamic world.

Pedagogy: The Science of Teaching: The dictionary meaning of the term pedagogy is ‘science of teaching. It is a holistic science of education. In related literature it is referred to as correct use of teaching methods and strategies. Pedagogy is not only referred as a science but also an art of teaching. As a science it facilitates teacher in saving time and energy by providing theoretical and practical knowledge about the philosophical, psychological and sociological bases of teaching – learning processes. This enable teacher in making his teaching more effective and goal directed which further ensures maximum use of available resources. Pedagogy also enables teachers to use the theories and knowledge of the methodologies flexibly in different situations. As an ‘Art’ it provides opportunity for the teachers to apply the skills to cater the particular needs of individual students.

The teaching –learning process is carried out with specific objectives. Teacher is required to pass on the ‘content’ to the students. The question of ‘how to present the content before the students?’ is answered by the pedagogy. In teaching-learning process ‘content and ‘pedagogy’ both are equally important. The teacher must have the knowledge of the both. Pedagogy identifies certain skills, methods, techniques, and strategies which are conducive to the teaching-learning process. The aim of pedagogy is to facilitate learning, to create proper learning environment, to make teaching effective and to maximize utilization of resources employed in education process.

Pedagogy: Changing With Time: The pedagogy is changing with changing time. The pedagogy in ancient period was centered round teacher. Teacher occupied important place. Teaching methods emphasize memorization and recalling the knowledge gained. At higher level of education, the methods like debates and discussions were included. Pedagogy during Socrates period emphasized Question- Answer method and discussion. During medieval period the military training came to prominence and teaching of war skills became important. Demonstrations and field based experiences were emphasized as teaching strategies.

With advent of industrial revolution the pedagogy slowly evolved to cater the needs of changing times. The industrial revolution which resulted in increase in demand of skilled

manpower is reflected in pedagogy as formal systems of schooling became popular. Teaching methods like lecturing, narration became widely accepted methods in classroom settings. Technological development of 20th century along with growth in all the areas brought about changes in society. The new social order is influenced by democratic ideals and concept of welfare states. The education of masses became the aim of education. The increasing knowledge in the fields like psychology, philosophy, sociology etc. brought about many changes in pedagogy. Many teaching methods, models and techniques evolved during this period like kindergarten method, demonstration method, project method etc.

The last decade of the 20th century witness the phenomenon of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. And with the dawn of 21st century there is a remarkable change in the very concept of teaching – learning process. Instead of teacher centered education the focus is now changed to learner centered education. The concept of learning has undergone changes earlier it was ‘learning as response strengthening’, then it became ‘learning as knowledge acquisition’ and now it is ‘learning as knowledge construction’. Education is no more a structured teaching of the teacher but a learners’ construction of their own knowledge.

Pedagogy: The Challenges or Veiled Opportunities: The education system is facing many challenges. They are identified as increasing use of technology in teaching – learning process, demand for individualized teaching, and need for lifelong education, easy access to information leading to its explosion, interactions round the globe. The barriers are melting down across the world so these challenges can be considered as veiled opportunities. There is a scope for experimentation and innovations. Flexibility in time and methods is available with new technology. The challenges of new age can be faced by reaping the benefits of latest technology, with flexibility in classroom settings and time schedule, multiplied educational opportunities, by using information management techniques, and by pooling the expertise from round the globe. In view of these let us consider the new age pedagogy.

New Age Pedagogy for Teaching Fraternity: Teaching fraternity is using different teaching – learning strategies. But in wake of current changes taking place in the world around, teacher will have to employ diversified methods and even combining two or three for attaining educational objectives. This expects teachers to have special skills like they should be techno-friendly, adaptable, and well informed about latest pedagogical developments. They have to master new

techniques, be innovative in their approach, and use the technology effectively. Some of the latest trends are discussed in the following pages.

Constructivism: The new age pedagogy differs from traditional objectivist view of knowledge where teacher transmits knowledge and the learner is considered as passive receiver of knowledge. Now the new paradigm emphasizes construction of knowledge by the students. Constructivism is a learner-centered approach. According to constructivism learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current or past knowledge. Learning is an interaction between the learner and the learning environment. Prior knowledge is used to interpret and construct new understanding during this interaction. Under constructivist setting learning activities are characterized by active engagement, inquiry, problem solving and collaboration with others. The teacher acts as a guide, a facilitator and also co-explorer. He encourages learner to question, challenge and formulate their ideas, opinions and conclusions. There is no 'single' correct answer in this process, multiplicity and innovative solutions are equally accepted as correct. Constructivism emphasize on the learning as a construction of knowledge by the learner. Thus the creation of new and innovative interpretations is encouraged. The pedagogy under constructivism is expected to foster competence among the learner for knowledge construction. The methods which induce critical and creative thinking, decision making are emphasized under constructivist theory. The teaching strategies mostly suggested are project, group tasks, case study, panel discussions, field visits and seminars.

Interactive Learning Environments: The constructivism presents challenge before teachers of translating a learning theory into a theory of teaching. This issue is addressed by creating interactive learning environments for students in new age pedagogy. The teacher of knowledge era must be skilled in creating interactive learning environment. Any professional development program must focus on this issue. It should inculcate and enhance this skill among teaching community. Let us consider characteristic features of the interactive learning environment.

1. In interactive learning environment the learner is an active participant and not a passive receptor.
2. The teacher act as a guide, a facilitator and co-explorer.
3. Different medium of communication can be used in this setting.
4. Interactive learning environments need a teacher to be a good communicator.

5. Teacher and students, both are expected to be techno-friendly.
6. New technologies play important role in interactive learning environment.
7. The learner is motivated for constructing knowledge.
8. The interpersonal relation among teacher-student, student-student is healthy and based on cooperation and encouragement.
9. There is a frequent interaction between the group members, between teacher and the group and between the teacher and individual member of the group.
10. Interactive learning environments provide opportunities for both individualized and social learning.

Teaching – Learning Strategies:

In an interactive learning environment the next challenge before the teacher is choosing most suitable strategies and methods to be employed. The new age pedagogy emphasizes interactive teaching-learning strategies. Some of them are outlined below.

- **Anchored Instruction:** It refers to instruction in which the material to be learned is presented in the context of an authentic event that serves to anchor the material and allows it to be examined from multiple perspectives. It uses realistic event or problem that is meaningful and motivating to student. The event or problem is complex; require analytical consideration and use of multiple processes. It facilitates collaboration, cooperation and negotiation. This method encourages students to view knowledge as tools to be applied to new situations, rather than knowledge as facts to be learned. Curriculum materials are often technology based.
- **Cooperative Learning:** It is also called a Collaborative learning. Cooperative learning is an approach to organizing classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. It involves structuring classes around small groups that work together in such a way that each group member's success is dependent on the group's success. Students need to collaborate with each other to share perspectives, solutions and plans related to the complex task. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn. It requires individual accountability within a group. Thus it creates an atmosphere of achievement.
- **Problem – Based Learning:** In Problem-based learning- a realistic problem is given and requires self-directed learning and use of Meta cognitive strategies by the students.

- **Student's Peer Teaching:** Student's peer teaching involves students teaching other students in a given subject area. It helps students to feel more comfortable; students try new ideas, develop courage and confidence and shed inhibitions.
- **Case – Based Instructions:** Case – based instructions involves use of stories or teaching cases to facilitate contextual knowledge and understanding among students.
- **E-Learning:** E-learning is communication and learning activities through computers and networks or via electronic means. It refers to formal and non-formal education that uses electronic delivery methods such as internet based learning delivery packages, CD-ROM, online video conferencing, websites or e-mail to manage the relationship between teacher and learners. It is flexible and suits individual demands.
- **Blended Learning:** Blended learning is the combination of two or more instructional methods. It is a mixture of traditional learning and online learning. It is a convergence of one or more teaching methods or face-to-face and e-learning method to enhance learning experience by integrating advantages in these two pedagogies.

Shaping Future Classrooms: Recommendations for Teachers: In light of the above discussion on new age pedagogy, it is quite clear that the teacher has a tough job ahead. The nature of classroom is rapidly changing and also changing with it the pedagogy. The new trends are described in detail in preceding pages. Now the challenge remains how teacher should gear himself to be able to surf on tides of change. Here are some recommendations for shaping future classrooms for effective teaching – learning process. The teaching process can be divided into three stages. The role of a teacher with respect to these three stages is expected to undergo changes. The suggestive strategies are

1 Preparation stage: At preparation stage teacher is to focus attention on

- Determining the level of previous knowledge of students as students will construct new knowledge based on this level.
- Deciding on learning outcomes in terms of observable behavior and skills and accepting multiplicity of solutions or outcomes.
- Technology to be used as medium for communication.
- Teaching method or strategy to be employed.
- Then selecting the content keeping in view above points.

- Translating ‘content’ into software mode to be easily used along with the hardware technology.

2 Presentation stage: Requires teacher is to look after following points during presentation stage.

For creating **interactive learning environments** teacher can.

- Show interesting clip or a story for ‘breaking the ice’.
- Divide students in groups with more familiar faces as group members.
- Give small easily achievable tasks in the beginning for motivating all the group members.

Using technology

- Ensure all the students are familiar with the technology used in the class.
- Explain new mode of technology at first to the class before introducing it.
- Do not allow students to get diverted from the track while using technologies like internet or social networking sites.
- Try to cater to the individual needs to the students.

Employing teaching method or strategy

- Follow every step slowly to enable all the student to keep pace with the class.
- Focus attention on the steps to be followed in a particular method.
- Instead of using purely technology based method, go for blended method.
- While combining two or more strategies pay attention to the fact that essential aspect of the strategies are kept integral in new module.
- Give necessary instruction to the students; explain what is expected from them, what tools they have and what they aim at. Clear instruction and adequate information regarding procedure to students will bring about good results.

Motivating students

- Take part in the group discussions and activities as co-member while students are working in groups.
- Give hints or suggest reference points for finding solutions.
- Accept all the innovative ideas put forth by students.
- Encourage novel way of thinking by verbal and facial gestures.

- Keep tone of the communication warm and sympathetic. Avoid sarcastic or harsh tone of communication.

3Evaluation stage:Teacher is expected to keep track of the progress of the student. During evaluation stage teacher can take following steps

- Take regular feedback from students by asking questions or by participating in their group activity. Evaluation should be continuous and diagnostic in nature.
- Use multiple evaluation techniques.
- Keep objectivity in evaluation.
- Keep track record of students through continuous – comprehensive evaluation to provide remedial teaching.

The new age pedagogy has brought with it new challenges before teaching fraternity. The professional development programs for teacher are to be so devised that these new skills are acquired by the teachers. Awareness, adequate theoretical knowledge and practical experiences in new age skills will go a long way in improving educational practices in our schools and colleges. Along with conducting a faculty development program, can some strategies for evaluating performance of the faculties be devised? Can there be some mechanism for assessing and ensuring utilization of training in day – to – day teaching by faculty once he returns to the college after completing the faculty development program? These issues are also very important while we are addressing the issue of new age pedagogy for teachers. Evaluation techniques like Questionnaire, feedback forms, appraisal by peer teachers etc. can be used. These techniques are only indicative, many more can be added to the list. A faculty development program along with follow up will help ensuring quality education in the country. And we then can say that teachers equipped with the new age pedagogy will shape brighter and prosperous world of tomorrow.

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