CAN ICT REPLACE THE TEACHER IN THE CLASSROOM?

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Abstract

"A painter knows what he wants to paint, a sculptor knows what he wants to sculpt but the sad truth is that today's teacher do not know what the goal of their teaching is!"

- Swami Vivekananda[1]

It is a bitter truth of today's situation. Though it does not sound well but these words are given by a great visionary Swami Vivekananda and it reflects in today's era also.

There is a huge gap between the learner and teacher. Though we all are thinking of learner centric view in teaching learning process still we are far away from the reality. To clarify or test this statement we need to introspect. At the other side ICT: Information communication Technology is replacing human efforts in every field like public and private sector services. Now it's time to think the solution for replacing teachers. At one side we can see private schools having smart classrooms and advanced teaching learning strategies whereas at another side we see traditional approach of teaching which is struggling with wastage and stagnation. How to speak about quality control in such terms? We have to see the reality in education. There are some advantages and disadvantages of using ICT in schools. We should try to find out a balance between it and try to use it to enhance the quality of education. Today's teacher should be a SMART teacher who makes maximum use of ICT to cater diverse needs of students and finds out new trends in Education. There is a huge gap between the learner and teacher. Though we all are thinking of learner centric view in teaching learning process still we are far away from the reality. To clarify or test this statement we need to introspect. At the other side ICT: Information communication Technology is replacing human efforts in every field like public and private sector services. Now it's

time to think the solution for replacing teachers also. Let's see whether it is possible to replace teacher through ICT?

We all speak about providing quality education to all levels of the society. Right to Education (1992) act highlights the need of providing quality education to all children. This is 2015 and we all know there is a long way to go. Before discussing this in detail we should see what is ICT?

➢ "ICT (Information communication Technology) means new digital technology used for communication."

➢ "It is a diverse mixture of technology used for communication which can create, store, bring value addition, send or transfer the data."

Audio, visual, and audio-visual aids are used in ICT such as: Radio, T.V., Mobile, Computer, Internet, etc. ICT is mainly used for communication, entertainment and education.

ICT has changed the scenario in education. We can see the changes from the following aspects:

1.   **Teaching Learning Process**:- initially teaching learning process was teacher centric where teacher was the leader of the classroom and primary source of knowledge. Students never used to challenge him and always listen his orders or teachings. Right from ancient time in Gurukul system till 20th century the teacher used to be the knowledgeable person in the classroom. There was one way communication, less interaction and lecture method used most of the times. In the beginning of 21st century computers were used for other purpose in different fields. Education is one of that. People used to get maximum valid information of any topic. It was easily accessible and standard also. Logical reasoning had been started from Socrates method. Students started asking their doubts to the teachers. Students contributed in research areas also. With the help of ICT two way communication, more interactive sessions and discussion method is used frequently in the classrooms. Use of radio, T.V., Mobile phone was done by the teacher to give real life experiences to students. Blogs, e-mail, chat, video / audio conferencing, social networking sites created a platform for students to involve in teaching learning and for teachers to use collaborative and cooperative learning. It provided a healthy atmosphere in classroom. Virtual classroom, virtual universities became milestones in education. Distance learning will be provided through MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses) to

thousands of people at one time. This is definitely a revolutionary moment in the field of education.

2. **Research**:- Teaching, Research and extension these are three dimensions of higher education. Before the use of ICT, Research was a tough job and needed lots of time to get the data, analyse it and finding the conclusion. But due to ICT data is easily available from e-library, Wikipedia, and many encyclopaedias. It gives you thousands software which can analyse the data and provide you the results by which you can find the conclusion. It also prevents plagiarism which controls the quality in Research.

3. **Administration**:- Due to ICT there is a revolution in maintenance of student's records, admission process, result process. It helped us in reducing paper work. It saved time, money and human efforts with no mistakes.

4. **Evaluation**:- today we all are aware of CCE (Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation). ICT has provided various techniques of evaluation, which can be recorded and analysed. Online examinations, assessments, assignments can be given through ICT. ICT can be used in both summative and formative assessments in evaluation procedure.

There is no doubt that ICT has become the need of an hour. It changed the basic needs from food, shelter, clothes to food, shelter, clothes and internet. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, after the fulfilment of basic or physical needs we should fulfil the need of security, love, belongingness, esteem and self realization. ICT helps the individual in fulfilling all needs. It deals intra personal and inter personal relationships. It also reaches to the core areas to remote areas of any country. Right from the city to any village we can see the use of internet. Many times it is used for entertainment or communication. But we have to think seriously about using internet in education for enhancing the quality. Following are the benefits of using ICT in Education:-

1. **Access to remote areas**:- ICT can reach remote areas so there is no limitation of boundaries. Through satellites quality programmes can be created and send over to all the students who require them.

2. **Low coast**:- the students from remote areas have to go to cities to get further education which is not available at their place. It costs too much and results in wastage in education. Compare to this ICT education is cheaper.

3.   **Any time anywhere**:- any time anywhere is the main characteristic of ICT. A person who is working can continue his education from anywhere. It is accessible 24/7 to study.

4.   **No age limit**:- there is no age limit to complete the education. Student can complete his education by deciding his priorities.

5.   **Student centric approach**:- In ICT education student centric approach is used. CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction), Self Learning Material, Web based Learning, Technology aided learning is used to develop the interest in learning and different evaluation strategies are used to evaluation. There is no burden of teacher in any manner. Student can learn in his own pace.

Though there are benefits of using ICT in classrooms or in education we have to be aware of its challenges. They are as follows:-

1.   **Electricity**:- in villages there is load shading for 2 to 15 hours. This can be a biggest trouble in integrating ICT in Indian classrooms.

2.   **Access of Internet**:- internet has reached to mass in a short period. But there is limitation of the access. We are facing the range problem at many places so it's difficult to rely on internet for education.

3.   **Medium**:- maximum courses are available in English. It can be a barrier for students who find it difficult to interact in English.

4.   **Attitude**:- teachers attitude towards ICT is needs to be changed. Many teacher have that fear of getting removed from the post of a teacher if ICT is used in classroom frequently. People are not only afraid of language barrier but also have the fear of technical skills. They don't want to take help of advanced technology. They think that technology will control them and they will be totally lost through this.

This list is never ending. Now we have to see that how ICT can replace the teacher in Indian scenario? Let's see the fact:-

1.   **Impact of ancient education system**:- In India people still think that teacher is a noble person and teaching is noble profession. Whatever he says is truth and accepted by the mass. ICT is technical term and cannot give the trustworthiness to people. Teacher is the one who motivates students, encourages them for good things and also shows them direction towards their future. ICT cannot do these things.

2.   **All round development**:- Teacher takes care of the all round development of the student. It includes physical, mental, moral, social, spiritual development. Teacher

organizes and conducts various activities which can lead to all round development. Teacher also inculcates values among the students. ICT cannot deal with this aspect.

3. **Role model**:- Teacher is the role model of students. They try to imitate their teacher. They find the solution through observing the teacher. ICT cannot be the role model which controls student's behaviour.

4. **Motivation**:- Teacher is a great motivator. He knows the strengths and weaknesses of his students. He motivates for good things and controls bad things. He has the vision to see the student's future so he can guide him properly.

5. **Friend, philosopher and guide**:- In India teacher is known as friend who shares good things with students, philosopher who motivates students to walk on his paths and create new philosophy, and guide who guides towards their future. ICT cannot handle these tasks.

6. **Manager**:- Teacher is good manager who manages maximum things like: classroom, events, curricular and co curricular activities, examinations, practical aspects etc.

7. **Deal with diverse learners**:- Teacher finds out diverse learners and plans to fulfil their needs with real experiences. He knows how to handle all types of learners. ICT is programmed for specific learners, not all learners at a time.

It proves that ICT is not a perfect solution for replacing the teacher. It can be used to cater the needs of diverse learners. It has to be used smartly by the teacher in flowing manner:-

1. **Techno savvy**:- Teacher has to be techno savvy to understand the use of ICT in different classroom situations as per the need.

2. **Communication**:- ICT is mainly used for the communication. It can be synchronous (one way) or asynchronous (two way). Teacher has to be good communicator who can communicate through ICT.

3. **Presentation**:- Teacher should make use of ICT for educational presentations.

4. **Evaluation**:- ICT has provided us various evaluation strategies. Teacher should make use of it wisely.

5. **Any time anywhere**:- Teacher should record his lectures and store it so that he can give it to absent students. He should give assignments online to avoid favouritism. He should provide equal opportunity to every student to learn in his own time and pace.

6. **Manager**:- Teacher can manage various activities with the help of ICT. He can use social networking sites, blogs, e-mails to list out and manage different activities.

7.   **Diverse learners**:- Teacher can take help of different software to fulfil the needs of diverse learners as per their learning styles.

In today's world we should not neglect the fact of diverse need of our learners. We should try to provide hands on experiences to them. We are the volunteers of "Skill based Society". We should incorporate skills among them. ICT has opened thousands of opportunities in front of us. If we travel in Global village ICT is the only vehicle through which we can complete our journey and reach to our desired goal.

In this way teacher can take help of ICT to provide quality education to his learner. This can be a challenge for a teacher and learner to accept the change in education. But in reality ICT has shown the role of teacher in global perspective. Due to Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization education has widen in every manner. We need to take help of ICT to improve and sustain quality in education. Few NGOs and government is giving free training of advanced ICT to teachers. Let's hope that we will be able to bridge the gap between public and private educational institutes by using ICT. This is the time where we have to "Think Globally and Act Locally". Let's change the future of India and make it Digital India.

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