A Definition Paper Illustrating Changing Trends in the Indian Education System

Mrs. Sonali Mutha[1], Mrs. Sapna Malpani[2], Mrs. Rekha Joshi[3]

[1]*Assistant Professor, Anantrao Pawar College of Engineering and Research, Pune*
[2]*Assistant Professor, Sinhgad College of Commerce, Pune, India*
[3]*Assistant Professor, PVG's College of Science & Commerce, Pune*
Corresponding Author – Mrs. Sonali Mutha

Abstract:

Education has always been a foundation of human progress and development, serving as a basis for expanding knowledge, enhancing skills, and promoting societal growth. From the earliest days of humanity to the complex education systems of today, the essence of education has remained central to human civilization. However, how education is imparted has evolved drastically and is driven and shaped by cultural, societal, and technological paradigm shifts.

Since E-education has become the principal mode of learning since the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to support learners and facilitators in digitization. There is a definite need for revolutionary changes in the Indian Education System, which has been thought of and focused on in the latest National Education Policy 2020. Thus, the government has already started trying to provide online access for all learners, and we, as ordinary people, should support such initiatives.

This paper aims to study and define the process from civilization to rapidly changing educational reforms in today's fast-paced world from an aerial perspective.

Keywords: Education, Education Reforms, Trends in the Indian Education System in Different Time Intervals

Introduction:

Education involves teaching, learning, training, and instructing. "Educate" is a Latin word that means raise or feed. It feeds or raises a new generation by transmitting knowledge and skills from one generation to another in various forms.

Education may be formal (a structured institutional framework that occurs at schools, colleges, and universities, follows a specific curriculum, and awards recognized academic certificates or degrees) or informal (unstructured, occurring outside the boundaries of the formal education system through experiences starting from the early childhood phase and being a lifelong process).

Education plays a vital role in personal and societal development. It fosters critical thinking, economic awareness, cultural understanding, civic engagement, and making this world a worthy and better place for humanity. It is one of the essential pillars of any society.

For a systematic study, we have divided this entire journey into three parts:

(1) Before Independence - The Early Age Ancient Gurukul System:

Before India's independence, education was mainly imparted through ancient systems like Gurukul or madrasas, emphasizing religious studies and classical knowledge by memorization and oral transmission of knowledge and skills.

However, its access was limited for lower castes (Varna-based system) and women.

(2) Post-Independence - The Middle Age Traditional System:

After independence, the Indian education system significantly improved. It prioritized universalizing primary education, expanding higher education, promoting science and technology, and addressing disparities with key initiatives like the Right to Education Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The post-independent era is characterized by

- Expansion of Access**:** The government prioritized expanding access to higher education, establishing numerous universities and colleges.
- Emphasis on Science and Technology**:** Focus was placed on developing scientific and technological capabilities to drive national development.

During this time, the Indian government underwent several education reforms, including:

1948 education policy, also known as the Radhakrishnan Commission, focused on reforming and modernizing higher education in India, emphasizing quality, research, and professional education, and recommended the establishment of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

1968: The first National Policy on Education (NPE) focused on compulsory education for children up to 14 years old.

1986: The second NPE aimed to address disparities between different social groups and emphasized providing education to all sections of society, particularly marginalized communities, which was modified further in 1992.

(3) The Modern Age - Technology-Driven System:

Modern Age Technology-Driven Education System—Considering pitfalls in previous Education systems and the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, there was a need for a technology-driven Education System. India's higher education sector is undergoing significant transformation, driven by policy reforms, technological advancements, and a growing emphasis on skill-based learning. Guided by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, India strives to build a globally competitive and inclusive phenomenon to transform India's education system by promoting holistic, multidisciplinary learning focusing on 21st-century skills to equip students for a globalized world.

Literature Review:
Pre-Independence Era:
The Early Age: Learning through Experiences—Early humans learned required survival skills through observation, imitation, and hands-on experience. This informal education was necessary for survival, ensuring the continuation of the species and the transmission of practical skills. The Ancient Gurukul System emphasized teaching through oral instructions, practical experience, and various religious activities, such as chanting, yoga, & meditation.

The system was characterized by,

1) Imparting moral, physical, spiritual, and intellectual growth (holistic development) and values like humility, truthfulness, and discipline were central.

2) Students (Shishya) lived with their "guru" (teacher) in a residential setting such as Gurukul, madrassahs, paths alas, temples, etc.

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The Middle Ages: Preservation and Expansion of Knowledge:

The **invention of the printing press** in the mid-15th century revolutionized education by making books more widely accessible and affordable. This period saw the rise of universities and a shift toward more specialized arts, sciences, and humanities studies. Education was no longer limited to religious or elite groups, as more individuals could access knowledge. Literacy rates began to rise, and a more well-rounded education system began to take shape.

The **Enlightenment** of the 17th and 18th centuries expanded the notion of education even further. During this time, the idea of universal education began to take root, advocating for education to be accessible to all, regardless of social class or background. The development of public schooling systems emerged as governments recognized the importance of education for a functioning democracy.

The **Industrial Revolution** dramatically changed society between the 18th and 19th centuries, requiring a more literate and skilled workforce. As industries grew, there was an increasing need for people who could read, write, and perform basic mathematics. This led to public education systems in many parts of the world, with compulsory education laws passed to ensure children were educated.

During this time, schools became more formalized, with standardized curricula and graded levels of education. Education became a means of social mobility, offering individuals the opportunity to improve their status in life through learning.

Post-independence Era - The rise of structured Education:

Education became seen as essential not only for individual development but also for the economic and social progress of the nation. This shift paved the way for more formal educational institutions like schools and academies. It is a Classroom-based, one-way communication education system. Textbooks are the primary source of information. Students follow a structured curriculum.

This system has a few drawbacks:

- Knowledge is restricted to a fixed curriculum, and there is less flexibility for interdisciplinary studies or skills beyond academic learning. It also does not encourage active learning via critical thinking and exploration.
- Regardless of individual differences, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is used.
- This system cannot reach all the students in rural areas because of a lack of infrastructure, language

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barriers, transportation issues, low digital literacy, teacher shortages, etc.

- Limited economic growth due to outdated structure and lack of practical skills required for modern jobs.

Modern Age Technology-driven Education-for-All:

Education became essential for individual development and nations' economic and social progress, supporting the transition from developing to becoming a developed country. With the rise of the internet and digital technologies, how education is delivered has evolved dramatically. The internet has made knowledge more accessible, allowing individuals worldwide to learn and share information. Online learning platforms, digital textbooks, and educational apps have revolutionized how we approach education, making it more flexible and personalized.

The modern education system aims to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper, and creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values. As our Constitution envisages, it aims to produce engaged, productive, and contributing citizens who will build an equitable, inclusive, and plural society.

This envisions a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education. NEP 2020 focuses on:

- Holistic development rather than rote learning.
- Multidisciplinary education allows flexibility in subject choices.
- Critical thinking, life skills, value education, analytical skills, decision-making skills, and problem-solving skills over memorization.
- Ethical and constitutional values to build an inclusive and plural society.
- Skill-based education for employability and innovation.

Technological Paradigm Shifts in Education:

Technology has always played a crucial role in shaping human civilization, and its impact on education has been profound. Over the centuries, technological advancements have continuously transformed how we teach, learn, and interact with knowledge. These shifts are not just about the tools and devices used in the classroom but about changing the very nature of education itself. As technology continues to evolve, it brings about new possibilities, challenges, and ways of thinking. Below are some key technological paradigm shifts that have revolutionized education

Research Methodology:

The study collected the information from secondary sources, i.e. websites and articles.

Analysis of Data:

The landscape of higher education has been significantly transformed by integrating various digital tools. These tools enhance the teaching and learning process, making it more interactive, engaging, and accessible. Here is a breakdown of some key tools:

1. Learning Management Systems (LMS) are software platforms that help educators manage, deliver, and track learning programs. They are commonly used in schools, universities, and corporate training environments to facilitate **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** and other instructional methods.

- **Moodle:** An open-source LMS that allows educators to create online courses, manage assignments, and facilitate discussions.
- **Canvas:** A popular LMS is known for its user-friendly interface &robust features, including grade books, quizzes, and communication tools

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Google Classroom: A streamlined, easy-to-use LMS that integrates smoothly with other Google products. Free, easy-to-use, integrates with Google Drive & Docs

2. Collaboration and Communication Tools: Students and teachers can collaborate to solve problems and share knowledge. These tools support file sharing, group projects, discussions, and peer feedback, fostering a more interactive and community-oriented learning environment.

- **Microsoft Teams:** A platform that combines video conferencing, chat, file sharing, and collaboration tools, facilitating seamless communication between educators and students.
- **Google Workspace (including Google Meet, Docs, Slides, etc.):** A suite of tools that enable real-time collaboration on documents, presentations, and spreadsheets, as well as video conferencing.
- **ClassDojo:** Connects teachers, students, & parents to share progress & classroom updates.
- **Seesaw:** A digital portfolio where students share their work, & parents can see their child's progress.
- **Flipped Classrooms:** In this model, traditional teaching methods are reversed. Teachers assign students to review materials (videos, readings, etc.) at home, while classroom time is dedicated to collaborative activities, problem-solving, or discussions. Tools like Edpuzzle help integrate video content with interactive quizzes, ensuring students engage with the material before class.

3. Interactive and Engagement Tools: These tools and methodologies are excellent for fostering engagement and making learning more interactive. They offer benefits in terms of student engagement and effective learning:
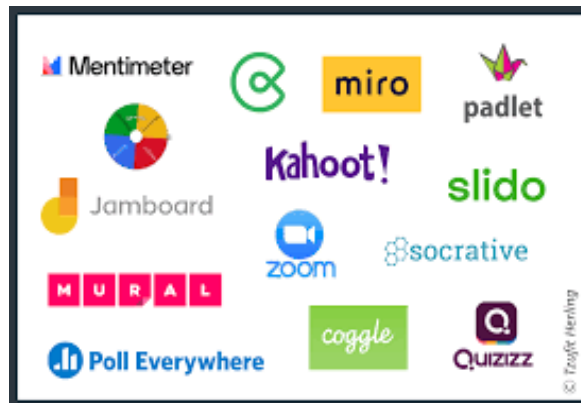
- Edpuzzle allows teachers to create interactive video lessons by embedding questions, quizzes, and polls into videos. Teachers can track student responses and progress in real time, providing a personalized learning experience.
- Kahoot! Kahoot! is a widely used tool that turns learning into an interactive game, helping students engage with content in a fun and competitive way.
- **Gamification:** By using strategies like points, badges, leaderboards, challenges, & rewards, gamification helps make learning more interactive, enjoyable, & effective.
- **QuizHub**: An intuitive tool for gamifying training, workshops, & webinars, offering features like quizzes & tournaments.
- PBL (Project-Based Learning) is an educational approach in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and meaningful projects. Instead of traditional lectures and rote memorization, PBL encourages students to develop knowledge and skills by working on a project over an extended period.
- Interactive Whiteboards (e.g., SMART Boards): These digital boards allow educators to present multimedia content, annotate documents, and engage students in interactive activities.

4. Content Creation and Delivery Tools: These tools help educators, trainers, & businesses develop **interactive lessons, presentations, videos, infographics, & other learning materials**.

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- **Canva:** A graphic design platform that allows educators to create visually appealing presentations, infographics, and other educational materials.
- **Adobe Premiere Pro/Adobe Creative Suite:**
  1. For the creation and editing of video content.
  2. Powtoon is used for animated explainer videos.

5. Assessment and Feedback Tools: Assessment tools help educators and trainers **evaluate student performance, track progress, and provide feedback** in classroom and online learning environments. These tools can be used for quizzes, exams, peer reviews, and performance tracking.

- **Formative Assessment Tools:** Kahoot! Quizizz, and Formative enable interactive quizzes and real-time feedback. **Socrative** – Live quizzes, polls, and quick assessments.
- **Rubric Tools**: Digital rubric tools streamline the process of evaluating student work against specific criteria.
- **Assessment Platforms:** Platforms like Gradescope provide tools for grading and giving feedback on assignments, especially those with written or visual components.
- **Microsoft Forms** – Similar to Google Forms, integrates with Microsoft Teams.

Education Apps: Targeted Learning & Skill Development:

The rise of **eLearning applications** has led to the development of **targeted education apps**, which focus on specific subjects or skills. These apps provide learners with **personalized, interactive, and engaging** educational experiences.

General Learning & Course Platforms:

- Khan Academy – Free courses in math, science, and more.
- Coursera – University-level courses from top institutions.
- Udemy – Online courses in various subjects, from coding to business.

Digital Libraries & Online Learning Resources:

Digital libraries and online educational resources provide students, teachers, and researchers worldwide access to books, research papers, academic journals, and multimedia content.

1. Open Access Digital Libraries *(Free & Public Resources):*

- Google Books – Scans of millions of books, some with full access.
- Project Gutenberg – Over 60,000 free eBooks (classics & public domain).
- Open Library – A vast collection of digital books and historical texts.
- HathiTrust Digital Library – Scholarly and academic books.

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2. Research & Academic Digital Libraries:

- Google Scholar – Academic papers, theses, and citations.
- JSTOR – Access to scholarly articles and books (some free content).

Social Media in Education:

Social media platforms can serve as tools for collaboration and engagement. Teachers can use these platforms to connect with students, share resources, and foster discussions.

1. Twitter: Educators can share resources, connect with other teachers, and participate in educational chats.

2. Facebook: Teachers can create Facebook groups for their classes to share information and resources.

- **E-Learning:** Communication Technologies Used in E-Learning are given in diagrammatic form.
- **Virtual Classroom:** A virtual classroom duplicates the context of a real classroom. In a virtual classroom, students and teachers use their computers to go to a virtual meeting place instead of a classroom.
- **Podcasting:** Podcasts are digital audio or video files containing meaningful content for learning that are available on websites.
- **Mobile Learning:** With the rapid expansion of mobile technology, mobiles, and smartphones, including iPhones, are becoming popular among learners. Although mobiles are used for personal purposes, they can also be used effectively for student learning.

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Challenges Ahead:

Despite these promising trends, there are persistent challenges in Indian higher education:

- **Accessibility**: Rural areas lag urban centers in Gross Enrollment Ratios (GER), currently around **28.4%**, highlighting systemic inequities.
- **Funding Gaps**: The Ministry of Education has estimated a **17% decrease** in expenditure on higher education for FY 2025, allocating only **39%** of its total budget to the sector.
- **Quality Assurance**: Many institutions focus on quantity rather than quality, with less than **50% of graduates** meeting industry employability standards.

Conclusion: The Future of Education:

Education is recognized as a fundamental human right in the modern world, crucial for personal empowerment, societal development, and global progress. Today, education is not just about acquiring knowledge; it is about fostering critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to solve complex global challenges.

Education has evolved from basic survival skills to the pursuit of intellectual, social, and emotional development. As we move further into the digital age, the future of education looks increasingly interconnected and global. Virtual classrooms, artificial intelligence, and personalized learning will continue to shape how education is delivered and accessed.

As technology advances, the paradigm shifts in education are far from over. With the rise of AI, immersive technologies, and mobile learning, education is becoming more personalized, flexible, and accessible. These technological innovations are enhancing how we learn and fundamentally changing what it means to be educated in the modern world.

The future of education will likely see even more revolutionary changes driven by technological advancements. As educators and learners adapt to these changes, the goal will remain to empower individuals with the knowledge & skills they need to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

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