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Music Education beyond Face to Face Mode: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract

Education is the only key that can unlock the door of development not only for any country, society but also for each and every individual. Only through education students get opportunities to develop their potentialities and contribute for the development of nation. It is said that India is a country of youth. So education system plays a vital role to produce productive youth. In education system students have to learn many subjects. In all those subjects Music is very important. Here it should be cleared that music is not only a subject but also an art, a language of emotions. Through Music everyone can express every feeling very well. Music is known as “Gurumukhi Kala.” Today’s changing scenario when we are talking about beyond face to face mode of education in simple words online education, it’s quite appropriate way of teaching-learning process but in the context of music we see some specific challenges like internet connectivity breaks laya and talas during class, every student can’t afford smartphone or system, a teacher can’t set student’s sitting position, their finger’s position etc. There is no personal relation among students and between teachers and students and many other challenges also. In spite of having all these challenges there are some opportunities for students who can’t go to school, who can’t meet experts and artists, who are unable to pay high fee, who are working somewhere else etc. For such type of students online education (beyond face to face mode of education) is just like a bless. In short beyond face to face mode of education has some challenges and opportunities just like other modes of education but in the present scenario this mode of education is the demand of time. The only thing that should be kept in mind that always use technology wisely and in an appropriate way.

Keywords: Challenge, Opportunity, Music, Express, Gurumukhi.

“Education is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities” -John Dewey

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India is a developing country but it is trying it's the best to get developed position. The only key is to get that developed position is 'Education'. Without education we can't imagine any development or any progress. As it is said that, "Education is the process of development in which consists the passage of human being from infancy to maturity the process by which he adapts himself gradually in various ways to his physical, social and spiritual environment" (T. Rayment). If we look at the history of education it is as old as human race. With the passage of time its faces were changed but the moto of education is always the same and that is development. Since the dawn of civilization, it is believed that education is completely responsible for the cultivation and the nourishment of a civilized society. A responsible and thoughtful society can be developed only by conscious and productive citizens and such citizen can be developed only through education. In the process of education, there are three interwoven elements involved –Educed (student), educator (teacher) and context (subject-matter). Teachers give information to students about many subjects which are important for the all-round development of the students.

Music plays a vital role from the beginning to the end of life. It's living proof is lullabies. Infants and toddlers who know nothing about language but they enjoy lullabies. Music is known as universal impulse. It provides opportunities for self-expression by integrating our mind, body and spirit. Music restores, maintains and improves physiological, emotional and psychological well-being. According to Sharma (2013) "Music is a universal language and it influences all level of human existence. It is a medium for communication, which can be both pleasant and healing experience."

Effect of music on human mind and spirit is very deep that is why music is included in education system from pre-primary to higher level. The method which is used to teach someone is called teaching method. If we take a glance at music teaching style (method), we find that it is continuously changing, with the different political, sociological and many other factors. To understand clearly music teaching styles, it can be divided into three time periods-

- 1- Music education in ancient time period
- 2- Music education in Medieval time period
- 3- Music education in Modern time period

In ancient time period "Gurukul Parampara" is followed to educate students. Students were known as "Shishya" and teachers were known as "Guru". In this parampara students went to the Gurukuls and lived with their Gurus for 10-15 years and gained complete knowledge by direct and indirect methods. In medieval period when Mughals came to India this Gurukul parampara changed into Gharana Paddhati. In this paddhati teachers were known as 'Ustad' and students were known as 'Shagird'. In this paddhati ustad taught and gave his art (performing style) only to his children and students and nobody else. At that time ustad refused to teach even to tell any technique to other ustad's students. With the entry of Britishers, education system was again changed. In this modern style students go to school and colleges and learn music as other subjects. Teachers come to classroom and teach all students. After spending 5-6 hours in schools students and teachers go back to their houses. This teaching style is known as institutional education system.

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Nowadays a tremendous change is occurred in our education system that is because of Corona Pandemic. Now education is beyond face to face. It is completely based on online mode. Though online mode is not new for teaching-learning process yet it has some challenges and some opportunities in the references of music teaching.

Music Education beyond Face to Face Mode: Some Opportunities

Accessibility of place and time: Accessibility of place and time means through online education music students can attend class from any place and any time according to their suitability. Beyond face to face mode makes it possible to attend class conducted by teachers in foreign countries like students can learn Table by Zakir Hussain from California etc. This mode of education removed all the geographical boundaries. In this mode students can record, archive and share lectures and performance videos. All these audio-video recordings can be used further easily.

Varieties of teaching style: Every student has a different I.Q., mental level and learning style. Some students are audio learner and some students prefer to learn through videos. Similarly, some students enjoy learning through group discussion and group performance and some students get distraction by large groups. Beyond face to face mode in other words in online mode students get varieties of teaching styles because like students teachers also have different teaching styles. Some teachers like lecture method and some teachers prefer to use demonstration method or question-answer method etc. So, here students can choose what resource they like and how they want to learn.

Attractive teaching learning process: In face to face teaching style teachers go to classroom and use lecture and demonstration methods only to teach students. There is nothing new and attractive in this teaching style. On the other hand in beyond face to face mode of education teachers can use different tool like videos, audios, PDFs, podcasts etc. to make his teaching more and more attractive. All these tools create a different and interesting learning environment for students.

Affordability: Beyond face to face mode every student can afford education. It reduces financial costs of education and makes it far more affordable rather than physical classroom learning. Through online mode students can save their transportation cost, status maintenance cost, study material cost etc. Some student can't afford to pay high class artists to learn from them but now it's possible to learn from them without any payment through online mode.

Students get more individual attention: Music is not such type art that students can learn in groups. This art has many minor techniques like how to put your finger, how much pressure should be given by finger on instruments, how to create appropriate voice by throat etc. Every student has different ability to play an instrument or sing properly

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and every student has different problems also. Through online education students can solve their problems with the help of instructor (teacher) personally. In fact students can take help from many teachers also.

Music Education beyond Face to Face Mode: Some Challenges

Technology Issue: Education, beyond face to face mode completely dependent on internet connectivity. It is the key challenge in online classes. In the reference of music classes this challenge creates a big problem. In music everything depends on laya and tala but because of connectivity problem laya and tala fluctuate and classes can't go smoothly. It's not possible for a teacher to perform or to teach his students and also not possible for students to learn according to laya and tala without a consistent internet connection.

Lack of trained teachers: As music is known Gurumukhi Kala. Teachers also take their education through Gharana Paddhati or through Institutional education system. That's why they have not adequate knowledge about internet and also don't how to conduct online classes. This problem makes bigger and bigger with old artists. They have deep knowledge about India music but they have no knowledge about internet even they don't know how to pass their knowledge through online mode.

Isolation: In beyond face to face mode teachers as well as students feel isolated. Peer Company plays a very important role in learning. Students can learn many things in peer-group but in beyond face to face mode of education there is minimal in fact, no physical interaction among students and between teachers and students. This creates a feeling of isolation in teachers and students both. Sometimes music students enjoy playing music in the absence of teachers and with their classmates. Such type activities help them a lot to produce something new and makes students creative. In beyond face to face mode of education all these creativities are not possible.

Difficult to focus on screen: In beyond face to face mode students and teachers both have to continue focus on screen. This is quite difficult for all the students and teachers to focus on screen for a long time period. If students don't focus on screen, they will be unable to learn how to play or how to sing. In fact, minor techniques of playing instruments and singing quite difficult to teach or learn through online mode because a teacher can show only but can't touch and put student's fingers appropriately on instruments. This is also very difficult for music teacher to make his online class more attractive, crisp and engaging rather than face to face teaching. One other challenge is that students can be easily distracted by an educational social media or other apps or sites.

Physically harmful: Some parents don't like online education. They think that this mode of education stopped their children's physical development. In fact, continue-focusing on screen is very much harmful for the student's eyes. Spending so many hours in screen time is one of the biggest problems in online education mode. Sometimes students develop bad posture, wrong sitting style, go too much close to the screen, sitting in a same position for many hours are some of the main problems which are related to

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physical health of students. Music students can develop many bad habits and styles about their sitting position, instruments taking position, their hand-leg position etc. In online mode of education only through audio-video a teacher can't explain everything and a student can't understand everything correctly what teacher wants to say.

Conclusion:

After all the above discussion it can be said that education beyond face to face mode have some opportunities as well as some challenges also. In present circumstances it is very necessary for teachers and students both to be friendly with technology. Change is the law of nature. This is also a new change in our education system. Though it has some discomforts, problems and challenges yet these all challenges are removable. On the other hand it has some advantages, merits and opportunities also. The only key feature to follow this mode of education is that parents, students and teachers should use technology wisely and for limited time period according to their suitability. On the government side internet problem should be solved not only for cities but also for villages. So that, each and every student may enjoy this new and innovative beyond face to face mode of education without any challenges.

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