

Information And Communication Technology (Ict), A Boon To Education Sector

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Abstract

In the 21st century, technology has become an integral part of our everyday lives. Technology has brought a huge transition into the world especially in the education system ie., from chalkboards to white boards and now to smart boards. It has become the main source of research, knowledge and teaching. Modern education system depends mainly on computer and technology. ICT, an extended form of Information Technology is a technological source where information is stored and can be accessed in the right form by the user. It acts as a communication tool in educational institutions to improve teaching and learning techniques. Since computer –based learning is the need of the hour, ICT provides enormous information and also enhances the effectiveness of learning. Learners find technology enhanced environment more stimulating and engaging rather than a traditional classroom. This paper titled, “Information and Communication Technology (ICT), a Boon to Education Sector” attempts to highlight the role and the function of ICT in education sector that adds value to teaching and learning.

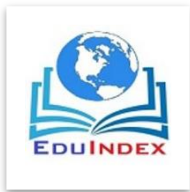
Keywords: *Information Technology, computer- based learning, traditional classroom, smart board*

In the 21st century, technology has become an integral part of our everyday lives. Technology has brought a huge transition into the world especially in the education system that is from chalkboards to white boards and now to smart boards. It has become the main source of research, knowledge and teaching. ICT has been developing rapidly in the fast moving world. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education is the mode of education that makes use of information and communication technology to support, enhance, and optimize the delivery of information. The whole educational system is reformed and ICT is integrated into educational activities. It gives exposure to the students to learn the subject using the Internet. This paper titled, “Information and Communication Technology (ICT), a Boon to Education Sector” attempts to highlight the role and the function of ICT in education sector that adds value to teaching and learning.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is an umbrella term which includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer, and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video conferencing and distance learning. When these technologies are used for educational purposes, namely to support and improve the learning of students and to develop learning environments, ICT can be considered as a subfield of Educational Technology.

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Modern education system depends mainly on computer and technology. Information and Communication Technology (ICT), an extended form of Information Technology is a technological source where information is stored and can be accessed in the right form by the user. It acts as a communication tool in educational institutions to improve teaching and learning techniques. Since computer –based learning is the need of the hour, ICT provides enormous information and also enhances the effectiveness of learning. Learners find technology enhanced environment more stimulating and engaging rather than a traditional classroom. Traditional forms of teaching and learning are increasingly being converted to online and virtual environments.

The utilization of ICT tools in education was increasingly felt in recent times and it is really a boon to the students. ICT promotes collaborative learning, including role playing, group problem solving activities and articulated projects. Information and Communication Technology consists of various tools and systems that help in enhancing the capability and creativity of teachers for a better teaching and learning ambience. Lim and Tay (2003) classify ICT tools as :

- 1) Informative tools - Internet, Network Virtual Drive, Intranet systems, Homepage, etc.
- 2) Resignation devices - CD-ROM, etc.
- 3) Constructive tools - MS Word, Power Point, Front Page, Adobe Photoshop, Lego Mindstorm, etc.
- 4) Communicative tools - e-mail, SMS, etc.
- 5) Collaborative tools - discussion boards, etc. forum

School teachers who involve in professional development programmes and activities gain knowledge of ICT integration and classroom technology organization. Teachers should be given time to practice with the technology, learn, share and collaborate with peer. They will thereby integrate the technology into their teaching. Training programmes for teachers that embrace educational practices and strategies address beliefs, skills and knowledge improve teachers' awareness and insights in advance, in relation to transformations in classroom activities. ICT infrastructure and access to e-resources in schools are the essential conditions for the integration of ICT in education. Frequent access to computers, updated software and hardware in schools are key elements to the successful adoption and integration of technology.

Professors use ICT to facilitate learning, critical thinking and peer discussions. ICT enhances professors and students' capabilities, and their well determined use transforms roles and rules in the classroom. ICTs in higher education are being used for developing course material; delivering and sharing content; communication between learners, teachers and the outside world; creation and delivery of presentation and lectures; academic research; administrative support, student enrolment etc.

In the present society, people have to access knowledge via ICT to keep pace with the latest developments. In such a scenario, education, which always plays a critical role in any economic and social growth of a country, becomes even more important. Education not only



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increases the productive skills of an individual but also it helps in financial development. It gives them a sense of well being and boosts their spirits to absorb new ideas, increases their social interaction, gives access to improved health and provides several more intangible benefits. ICT products such as teleconferencing, email, audio conferencing, television lessons, radio broadcasts, interactive radio counselling, interactive voice response system, audiocassettes and CD ROMs have been used in education for different purposes

The automatic functions of ICT helps an educator to demonstrate, explore and clarify aspects of the teaching method which enable the students learn more effectively. Teachers should be provided with specific professional development opportunities in order to increase their ability to use ICT for formative learning assessments, individualized instruction, accessing online resources, and for fostering student interaction and collaboration. Digitally literate teachers provide creative and individualized options for students to express their understandings, and leave students better prepared to deal with ongoing technological change in society. The interactive way in which information is stored, processed and presented can enable teachers and students to explore the model, to communicate effectively with others and present information effectively to different audiences. Successful implementation of ICT requires integration of ICT in the curriculum.

ICT enabled classrooms and the use of technology in education create an easy-to-manage learning environment where the delivery of information is smoother and the learning easier. Enabling ICT in institutions boosts the score of a college in NAAC, NBA, and ABET accreditations and the quality higher education is assured. In order to increase the usage of ICT and to promote computer enabled teaching and learning in Government and Government aided Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools, Government has instituted a National Award to encourage the Teachers and Teacher Educators for innovative use of ICT in teaching-learning. ICT-supported learning environments are indeed a boon and a beneficial aspect to a constructivist teaching approach.

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