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Bilaspur. (C.G.)  
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Asstt. Professor,  
Govt. College of Education (IASE)  
Bilaspur. (C.G.)  
Mob : 9425536474  
e-mail : apkppoddar@gmail.com

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Flat - H/2, Vaishali Nagar, Ward-13, Bilaspur. (C.G.) Pin 495001

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# Myths and Reality of ICT in Education

Dr. Vanaja, M. \* & Rafi Mohmad \*\*

Key Words : ICT, ICT in Education, Myth, Reality

## Abstract

ICTs have definitely revolutionized the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation processes and Institutions now focusing on Digitalization of Classrooms. The effective utilization of computers and information technologies in the Schools, Colleges and in Universities is rapidly increasing. Recent initiatives like SWAYAM, e-Patashala, e-PG patashala and MOOCs have created a record with their massive rapid expansion. Now, this impact of ICT in education has created so many doubts in the minds of the stockholders of Education. To adjust and adopt the changes in the system because of ICTs there are various opinions. In the stockholders there are the believers who think that under the right conditions technologies can have a monumental impact on the expansion of learning opportunities to wider populations and technologies can improve the teaching/learning process, enhance higher levels of cognition, and facilitate institutional management. The skeptics question the validity or authenticity of the tools, the agnostics are not sure, the pragmatists are holding back. The technologies are changing so fast and the impact is intensive. In the light of these prevailing conditions, the article deals with some myths and realities of about ICT enabled teaching and learning process. The spectrum of myths under discussion ranges from complete rejection of ICT to their over idealization.

## Introduction

Computer and Social Networking have bought the revolution in the field of education exploring and expanding towards new extremes. Thomas Edison, the father of electricity and inventor of the motion picture, predicted in 1922 that "the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and ... in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks." Since then high levels of excitement and expectation have been generated by every new generation of information and communication technologies (ICTs):

Compact discs and CD-ROMs, videodiscs, microcomputer-based laboratories, the Internet, virtual reality, local and wide area networks, instructional software, Macs, PCs, laptops, notebooks, educational television, voice mail, e-mail, satellite communication, VCRs, cable TV, interactive radio, etc.

Seymour Papert (1984) predicted that, "there won't be schools in the future! I think the Computer will blow up the school." People laughed at Seymour Papert in the 1960s, when he vividly talked about children using computers as instruments for learning and for enhancing creativity,

technologies quickly wears off, and those which do not tend to turn viewers into zombies rather than engaged learners. In addition, this comment is a real insult to good teachers everywhere. Good teachers are exactly those who can engage students creatively, regardless of the aids available to them. Technology might amplify the impact of good teachers, but it won't fix bad teaching.

o **Teachers are expensive:** It is exactly because teachers are absent or poorly trained that low-cost technology is a good alternative. Low-cost technologies are not so low cost when total cost of ownership is taken into account and put in the economic context of low-income schools. Furthermore, technology cannot fix broken educational systems. If teachers are absent or poorly trained, the only proper solution is to invest in better teachers, better training, and better administration... even if it's expensive.

o **It's time for something new:** **Technology :** Technology has never fixed a broken educational system, so if anything is getting old, it's the attempt to patch bad education with technology. If other efforts aren't working, maybe the school system needs to be thrown out and rebuilt from the ground up, as Qatar recently did with its education ministry. There are plenty of new things to try that don't require new technology.

o **India is simply not ready for digital teaching and learning materials:** The challenges facing many education systems in India, to say nothing of the needs of learners themselves, are often considerable. Even should we choose to adopt such a construct, there is no denying that there are many places, where digital teaching and learning materials have been in use in various ways – in some cases for quite a while. The use of low-cost e-reading devices,

of computers and laptops and national educational portals – while these may not be the norm for most students, they are a reality for many.

o **If we don't act now, we will fall behind:** One common theme that animates many decisions to explore the use of digital teaching and learning materials is that education systems, which do not embrace the use of technology will 'suffer' in comparison to those in other countries, and the competitiveness of the country itself may be eroded over time as a result. Rhetoric of this sort is often invoked by politicians to garner support for related initiatives – aided in some instances by vendors eager to provide 'solutions' to 'problems' that policymakers have not always clearly defined, or perhaps even in some cases understood. While there may be some truth to such worries, there is often a danger that such concerns can lead to hasty, ill-conceived or inadequately considered plans to quickly introduce new technologies into schools. Decisions about the introduction of, or transition to, the use of digital teaching and learning materials are not ones to be taken lightly, or quickly.

### Conclusion

ICT can certainly help in disseminating educational content, and facilitate remote learning. It can overcome challenges like teacher shortage and student dropout—and bridge the digital divide. Those thinking about tapping the opportunities in the education sector should also take note of the typical challenges. Technology is much like every other tool in a classroom: some people see it as a benefit and others see it as a distraction. Math teachers used to complain that calculators were not appropriate for students to use in class because they made problems "too easy", whereas now it is the norm to use this kind of technology in learning. It's not as simple as installing a PC and running

a CBT (Computer Based Training) package. "There are many challenges when setting up projects at each level. One challenge is the consistency in the way teaching is done. The second challenge is that, small schools & colleges with limited staff. The teacher plays multiple roles—as a teacher, administrator, principal and one who is highly respected at the local community level. So the challenge lies in consistency in the delivery of education and also in evaluation. In that context digital

technology gives you the ability to bring about a standard in the delivery of education." Language and contextualization is one of the bigger challenges." The teachers and students should be able to relate to the content, rather than just mug it up. To "tech" or not to "tech" education is, therefore, not the question. The real question is how to harvest the power of ICTs to make education relevant, responsive, and effective for school settings and lifelong learning.

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\* **Dr. Vanaja, M.:** Associate Prof. Dept. of Education and Training, Moulana Azad National Urdu University, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. E-mail: [vanajamadura@yahoo.co.in](mailto:vanajamadura@yahoo.co.in)

\*\* **Rafi Mohamad:** Asstt. Prof. Dept. of Education and Training, Moulana Azad National Urdu University, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. Telangana