

INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING INDIAN MUSIC

DR. NIKHIL BHAGAT

Associate Professor in Tabla, Dept. of Instrumental Music, Faculty of Performing Arts, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

Abstract

Teaching and learning of Indian music have never been the same. Investigating the coexistence of formal music institutions and traditional Gurukul systems, the study traces the evolution of Indian music education. It analysed how technology began taking center stage. Then, it goes on to discuss about the changes introduced by COVID-19 pandemic and how it emerged as a disruptive force that compelled a rapid shift towards online education, prompting educators to embrace technology-driven approaches that became a permanent norm. The National Education Policy 2020 emerged as a key player, advocating for the integration of technology in Indian music education. It is also important for new-age teachers to consider certain factors to best assist new-age learners of Indian music. Foreseeing future requirements, technology, guided by educational policies, will be an indispensable element in preserving core values while ushering in ongoing innovations in the Indian music education.

Keywords: Innovation in Teaching, Learning Indian Music

INTRODUCTION

Indian classical music has a history that dates back over 2000 years, with its origins found in the Vedic literature. It evolved from Vedic chants, with the Natya Shastra, an ancient Sanskrit text, providing early principles of music. Over time, various classical music traditions emerged, such as Hindustani and Carnatic.

The Gurukul system played a vital role in preserving and transmitting this musical heritage. In this traditional education system, students lived with their gurus (teachers) in a close-knit environment. The guru imparted not only musical knowledge but also instilled discipline and values. This intimate teacher-student relationship fostered a deep connection between the learner and the art form.

The Gurukul system emphasized oral transmission, where students learned through listening and imitation. This method preserved the nuances, emotions, and improvisational aspects of Indian music, contributing to its unique character. Today, while the Gurukul system persists in some forms, formal music education institutions also play a crucial role in nurturing and disseminating Indian musical traditions.

THE RISE OF INSTITUTIONAL MUSIC IN INDIA

While the Gurukul system has played a vital role in traditional music education, formal music institutions have also contributed to the nurturing of Indian music. The first institutes of music in India, such as the Akhil Bhartiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal founded by Pt. V. D. Paluskar in 1901 (Lahore the then India), KM Music Conservatory, founded by the Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman, and the Calcutta School of Music, have been pivotal in providing formal Western and Indian Music education.

While the Gurukul system has historically been fundamental in preserving this heritage, the rise of formal music education institutions has further contributed to its nurturing. Notable pioneers in this institutionalization include the music college founded by Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III in Vadodara in 1886, which was the first of its kind in India.

Additionally, institutions such as Prayag Sangeet Samiti, the University of Calcutta, and the University of Delhi have been instrumental in shaping the music education landscape. Furthermore, the emergence of modern music schools and colleges, such as the KM Music Conservatory and the Calcutta School of Music, has provided a blend of traditional and contemporary music education, catering to the changing needs of the music industry.

he Bombay Symphony Orchestra, established in 1930 by Mehli Mehta, and the Bombay Chamber Orchestra, founded in 1962, and KM Music Conservatory, founded by the Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman in 2008 have been influential in promoting Western classical music education in India. These institutions and pioneers have played a crucial role in shaping the landscape of music education in India, contributing to the preservation and growth of both Indian classical and Western music traditions.

The institutionalization of music education in India has been a significant development in the preservation and dissemination of Indian musical traditions.

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology's role in teaching and learning Indian music has evolved significantly, with various digital technologies aiding the process from the early stages to the present day. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed music production, preservation, recording, listening, sharing, transferring, and broadcasting, making music learning more accessible and illustrative.

The use of technology such as Skype has enhanced the learning experience by providing access to world-class music apps and live streaming, thereby spreading the tradition and gaining global recognition.

Electronic aids to music education, such as the "Surpeti" or "Shruti Box," have become essential in Indian music education and performances, and the application of high technology has begun to make significant strides in the field of Indian music. Digital learning has also played a marvellous role in the standardization and unification of norms in Indian classical music, reducing the costs of higher education and making learning more beneficial than the traditional setup.

The Indian music industry has also witnessed the impact of new technologies such as Spotify's 'Amplifier' project, which aims to highlight the spirit and personalities of women shaping India's audio landscape, showcasing the intersection of technology and music in promoting inclusivity and diversity

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE SHIFT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF INDIAN MUSIC

The impact of COVID-19 on the teaching and learning of Indian music has been substantial. Prior to the pandemic, traditional methods such as in-person lessons and Gurukul systems were prevalent. However, the onset of COVID-19 led to a rapid shift towards online music education. According to a study on students' attitudes toward online music education during the COVID-19 lockdown, the transition to remote teaching resulted in a loss of classroom awareness and social presence, impacting the traditional teaching tools used in face-to-face music education. This sudden shift in pedagogical offers caused by the COVID-19 health emergency affected the involvement of all senses in music education, as it means not only pure information but also the engagement of smell, touch, sight, and hearing.

Post-COVID, the use of online platforms for teaching and learning Indian music has become more prevalent. According to a study on the impact of COVID-19 on the educational environment in India, the fear of getting COVID-19 and lockdown made students miserable, adversely affecting the teaching and learning behaviour of both tutors and students.

However, the study also found that college students have a positive perception of online classes, indicating a shift in their attitudes toward online learning. The National Education Policy in India has also played a role in this transition, emphasizing the use of technology in education and promoting online and digital learning platforms. The policy aims to leverage technology for the teaching and learning of Indian music, making it more accessible and inclusive

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AND ITS ROLE

The recent National Education Policy (NEP) in India has offered a new direction to the teaching and learning of Indian music by promoting the use of technology. The NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of technology in education, making music learning more accessible and inclusive.

The policy envisions leveraging technology to enhance the teaching and learning of Indian music, preserving its tradition while embracing modern tools and platforms. The use of various apps in Indian music education has become normal, enabling students to learn music using technology like Skype, world-class music apps, and live streaming on digital platforms. This has not only made music learning more accessible to all learners but has also helped in spreading the tradition and gaining global recognition for Indian music.

Furthermore, the NEP 2020 has laid the foundation for the use of electronic aids in Indian music education. While the impact of high technology in Indian music education was relatively slow compared to the West, the policy has created an environment ripe for the spread of electronics into the field of music education. The use of electronic aids, such as drones, rhythms, and experimental efforts at repetitive melodies, has become commonplace, with the potential for future applications such as computer-assisted composition and education.

Factors that are important in new-age teaching and learning of Indian music:

Innovative teaching methodologies

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the adoption of innovative teaching methodologies in Indian music education. Due to the pandemic, educators have been compelled to explore and implement innovative methods to engage students in remote learning environments. This has led to the development of new approaches to music instruction, such as gamified learning, project-based learning, and the integration of modern music technologies into the curriculum.

Interdisciplinary approach

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to music education. With the shift to online learning, educators have sought to integrate music with other subjects to provide a more holistic learning experience for students. This approach has been instrumental in helping students understand the cultural and historical context of music, fostering a deeper appreciation for the art form and its connections to other areas of knowledge.

Technology-led enhanced learning

The use of technology in music education has become increasingly important due to the pandemic. The adoption of technology-led enhanced learning has been a response to the need for more accessible and interactive music education. Educators have turned to online platforms, virtual instruments, and digital music libraries to provide students with various educational tools and materials enhancing the learning experience.

Student centric approach

With the shift to remote learning, educators have focused on understanding and addressing the individual needs and interests of students. This approach has allowed students to take an active role in their learning, fostering a deeper engagement with music and helping them develop a lifelong appreciation for the art form.

Cultural Integration

The integration of cultural elements into music education has been a significant focus during the pandemic. Educators have sought to help students understand the rich cultural heritage of Indian music, fostering a sense of cultural identity and awareness. This integration has been instrumental in enhancing the overall learning experience and uplifting societies.

Collaborative Learning

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted most education systems, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners globally, which also included music learners. In response to this, collaborative learning has become increasingly important in Indian music education. Educators have encouraged students to work together in groups to achieve common goals, fostering teamwork, communication, and a deeper understanding of musical concepts and repertoire.

Interactive Multimedia Resources

The adoption of interactive multimedia resources in music education has been a significant response to the pandemic. With the shift to online learning, educators have turned to online tutorials, virtual instruments, and digital music libraries, which is essential to equip students with every-possible learning channel.

Mindfulness and Well-being

The integration of mindfulness and well-being practices in music education has become more prevalent during the pandemic. Educators have focused on fostering emotional and mental well-being, promoting a positive and supportive learning environment for students.

Professional Development for Instructors

The pandemic has underscored the importance of professional development for music instructors. Educators have sought to enhance their teaching skills, knowledge, and expertise to ensure that they are well-equipped to provide high-quality music education to their students in online and hybrid learning environments.

Customized Learning Paths

The use of customized learning paths in music education has become increasingly important during the pandemic. Educators have recognized the need to provide students with opportunities to learn at their own pace and as per their individual needs and interests, and must focus on offering a personalized learning.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 shuffle nudged both teachers and learners of Indian music towards quick changes in teaching and learning, with online platforms taking the lead. Now, with the National Education Policy 2020 setting the stage, Indian musicians are tuning into more technology in education, which is the need of the day. The future is about holding onto the soul of Indian music while tapping into new tools. The spotlight is on students, teachers, as well as technology. Teachers are on a constant learning curve, and students are on a path tailored just for them. Capitalizing on these opportunities, Indian musicians will be able to sustain the core values using ongoing innovations.

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