

Indian Streams Research Journal

International Recognized Multidisciplinary Research Journal

ISSN : 2230-7850

Impact Factor : 4.1625(UIF)

Volume -8 | Issue - 2 | March - 2016



USE OF MODERN TECHNIQUES IN LEARNING OF INDIAN
CLASSICAL MUSIC



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ABSTRACT :

Mankind has always worked to achieve easier living. Almost all the research and development that humankind performs is aimed to make life easier. The advancement in technology can be traced from the time when man discovered general laws of physics and used it to make his tools and machines. It started with making simple tools like axe, spears and discovering fire through simple friction. After then he made travelling easy by creating wheel. Since then, man has come a long way and has arrived at a stage where his everyday life is dependent completely on technology, be it electricity or internet without which the entire world would stand still. The requirement of science and technology to enhance life has penetrated almost every sector.

Keywords : make life easier , technology , music industry.

INTRODUCTION :

This includes the music industry where technology has changed the face of music completely. The recording hardwares used in earlier years have been replaced by computers, which are small, portable and user friendly. Computer generated sounds are being used in music which have created new genres in music. Consequently, Indian Classical has also not remained untouched by Technology. From live shows to recordings to social media, innovation and technology has helped Indian Classical spread its wings worldwide.

The Classical Music of India is considered a very strict and sacred art which has been carried through centuries and can only be properly learned under supervision of a guru and mastered after years of practice. However, at this moment, the world is on the brink of technological advancements. It is modifying and adapting to new trends everyday. Technology and modern methods have entered into teaching and learning of Indian Classical Music. This research paper aims to understand and study how modern technology has been utilised for greater effectiveness in teaching and learning processes of Indian Classical Music.

INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Indian Classical music is the indigenous form of music popular in the south east asia, especially India. The Indian Classical Music has its roots in the vedas. It has two main elements, *Raga and Tala* (melody and rhythm) where Raga can be compared to scale in western classical music. Both the Raga and Tala have ancient rules of formation and time of singing which are followed till date. The first text found in history explaining and authenticating Indian Classical Music as an art form is 'Natya Shastra', which is a book in sanskrit written by Bharata Muni on performing arts. Gradually, using ancient texts and rules as pillars, absorbing various other cultures, Indian Classical has evolved into a popular genre with several Vocal forms and a large repertoire of Instruments both for solo and accompaniment along with vocals. The Classical music of India is divided into two major streams i.e. The North Indian Classical music which is known as the Indian Classical Music or Hindustani Classical music and the Carnatic Classical music which is performed and practiced in southern parts of India.

TECHNOLOGY

The term technology is derived from the word Technical or technique which is a german word meaning some kind of special skill required to do a job. Thus technology can be defined as those things or skills which help us complete a task better. It may include anything such as a Utensil, a tool, clothing or any communicating device and also the skills required to produce them. Thus we can say that Technology is the application of knowledge and science to produce devices and services that make life easier.

Introduction of Modern Technology into Indian Music

In the Pre-Independence era, The Indian Classical Music had lost its demand and became unheard among the masses. It was alive only among the selected circles who were committed to saving this art form. Also, as all the communication channels and broadcasting mediums were closely scrutinised by the Britishers, it was very difficult among the people to learn Indian Classical Music. However, this scenario changed when India became Independent and Indian Classical started gaining recognition as a traditional Indian art form. This led to Indian Classical getting special recognition from the government.

Integration with Mass-Media

The Mass-Media is the one of the greatest gift of technology. Through Mass-Media, one can approach thousands of people easily. The Mass-Media can be categorised into two main sections:

The Print Media, which includes the Newspaper, magazines etc.

The Electronic Media which includes all other communication mediums like Television, radio, internet etc.

Indian Classical Music and the Print Media

The Introduction of print media technology into the learning of Indian Classical is a very important study as the print media gained immediate popularity regardless of the fact that Indian Classical follows the oral Traditions. The first printing press was set up in India at Goa by the Portuguese in 1440 for spreading their religion. After then, many more printing press were installed at the time of british rule. During this time newspapers, magazines etc were being printed and during this same time some books and magazines of Music were published. Most of these were published in regional languages like 'Rajasthan Pothi' by Behramji Taimurji Chinoy in 1838 in Gujarati language, 'Sangeet Raag Kalpadruma' in bengali language in 1852 by Krishnananda Vyas, and 'Gayan Prakash' in 1840 by Bhaushashtri Ashtaputre in Marathi. All these were published in their own printing press during the british era.

However, conditions substantially improved after the Independence and many musicians started spreading their thoughts and knowledge through Print media. Although there were many such authors and musicologists, but the resurrection of Hindustani Music through print medium is credited to the two stalwarts namely Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar (from 1872-1924) and Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (from 1860 to 1937). These two artists devoted their entire life in the promotion and propaganda of Indian Music. When they came into Hindustani Classical Music scene, there was no credible documentation of Ragas or bandishes, the education of Indian Music was only through oral tradition (one to one with Guru) and the Gharana System (Music in the family) was too much prevalent and it was too difficult for a person with no musical background to learn music. Both Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande developed an advanced Musical Notation system for Indian Classical and started penning down traditional bandishes and writing books.

Bhatkhande composed many bandishes and also collected many traditional

Dhrupads and Dhamaars, Thumris, Tappas and many other semi classical forms and preserved them in his own notation system. He also divided his books into levels from basic to advanced so that a learner could easily differentiate. He collected and noted almost 10,000 bandishes in his books. Paluskar also wrote almost 40 books explaining every raga in detail, and bandishes in notations making it very convenient for the learners to understand the music of India. Both these musicologists also organised concerts, seminars on music etc. Paluskar also ran music schools which later converted to Universities. The books written by them have now been accepted by universities for syllabus patterns and their bandishes are sung in almost every part of the country. Thus their contribution in the print media was immense which helped Indian Classical reach the masses and those who wanted to learn Classical Music thus marking the beginning of modern era for Indian Classical Music.

Indian Classical and Electronic Media

The inventions in electronic media changed the face of Music completely. Recording was introduced to mankind. Through recording, a man could listen an artist for as long as he or she wants and whenever he wants. The invention of magnetic tapes had a radical impact in the field of entertainment as everything could now be recorded. The proper recording of Indian Classical was done on Vinyl records also known as the LP disc. At the time the Vinyl records was introduced, there was nothing which could record long lengths of music. Hence when LP was introduced in India, almost every great artist of the time were recorded. Artists like Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Amir Khan, subbulakshmi, Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Begum Akhtar etc, Ustad Hafiz ali Khan are some of the artists whose rare records can be found till date. After more technical advancements, cassette tapes were introduced in the market. These were of almost similar technology of Vinyl but more compact, portable and could contain more Data. In this modern age, recording has become digital and much more enhanced and advanced. Now recording audio and visual is at the fingertips through various gadgets, and smartphones etc. also the modern communication mediums like radio transmission, Internet and satellite transmission have changed the ways of broadcasting and made information sharing

much easier. In Hindustani Classical also, technology has completely revolutionised the way of teaching and learning which is discussed in detail.

Indian Classical and Radio

The Britishers in India started the first radio namely 'The Indian Broadcasting Company' in 1926 in Calcutta and Bombay. After then radio broadcasting stations started appearing in almost every part of the Nation and by the time India became Independent, in 1947, there were total of 6 major radio stations. Radio was a very important breakthrough in the world of Indian Classical Music as it carried the Indian Music straight into the homes of people. Now, a person could listen to an artist very easily through a small radio set at his home. This also made learning easy. An aspirant could easily listen to accomplished artists and Pundits by tuning into radio station.

The All India Radio since the beginning has always been recognised as a cultural forerunner of India's traditions. It has always played a special role in promoting art music. During the period between 1952-57 AIR stopped broadcasting Film music so that it could concentrate on the promotion of Art Music. Some of the important work done by the Radio is:

- It has launched many weekly National Musical programmes aimed to promote Indian Classical Music. AIR also organises many talk shows from time to time which are very informative and are aimed to educate the audience more about Indian Music. It has brought many stalwarts like Pt. Ravi Shankar, Ustad Shujaat Khan etc. into talk sessions to discuss their life and music.
- After recording was introduced and LP's and cassettes were introduced in the market, All India Radio has constantly recorded every recognised artist also has a huge collection of cassettes and recordings which have been kept secured in its Database and from time to time, Akashwani broadcasts these recordings and some of them are very rare and informative and very helpful for the learners.
- Also Akashwani has been continuously working to bring forward upcoming artists in the field of Art music. It organises competitions on state and national level and the deserving candidates are awarded with grades according to their level of expertise. These candidates also have opportunity to perform in the concerts organised by the Akashwani in cities all over India.

Although, after globalisation, many private radio stations have appeared throughout the country but All India Radio remains the one organisation which has continuously worked for not only upliftment and preservation of Art Music but also educating, promoting and strengthening the situation of art music in India. Even now, in this age of capitalisation and marketing, almost 31% of the content broadcasted by All India Radio is Art Music. This proves that radio has been a very important technological advancement in the learning of Hindustani Classical as it brought learning and listening directly to home.

Electronic gadgets in Indian Classical Music

The world has come to a position where everything is possible through technology. It is similar in music also. Thousands of sounds can be generated through computers, sounds of Acoustic instruments can be digitally recreated and voice can be processed and enhanced to sound good. Man has brought technology within the touch of his fingers where one click could connect you to another person thousands of miles apart. Electronic gadgets have entered Indian Classical also. Some of the significant gadgets which have proven to be very important in Learning and promoting Classical Music are :

Portable Cassette Recorder

This was a very common gadget which could be found by almost every man's side for listening music while commuting. This was a very convenient gadget which could record and play simultaneously. As Classical Music is best learned face to face with a guru, this recorder can be placed anywhere in the vicinity to record the learnings and then could be played anytime again and again. This an ideal gadget while learning Indian Classical as the teachings of the guru could be easily recorded and played later. With time,

this has been replaced by digital audio recorders and nowadays, the recording feature is a very common application in Smartphones and can record large amount of data in wav format and in excellent quality.

Computers, Laptops and Tablet PC's

A major leap in the World of Technology is the Internet. The Internet has completely changed the process of learning and promotion and emerged as the strongest and fastest medium for worldwide promotion and learning.

The computers, Laptops and PC,s act as the principle device for accessing Internet. The Computer is a machine which has completely changed the Music Industry as it has replaced Huge Hardwares and machines earlier required for recording audio. These machines are portable, can handle many applications simultaneously and can store huge amounts of Data. Through these portable devices one can access the internet which has an infinite amount of data. The ways in which Computers have affected Indian Classical Music are :

- Computers have softwares for multi track recording which gives more clearer output and enhanced sound. This helps in Excellent quality recordings of Indian Classical which are enjoyed by the listeners. Thus, through a computer or a Laptop a Learner can record his voice and listen to it for improvement and better results.
- Computers and laptops are now used for recording live concerts which gives superior quality recordings even when performing live. Through this feature listeners and learners can enjoy the live performances of their favourite artists in very high quality anywhere and anytime. This feature also helps the listeners to listen to live concerts which they have missed.
- The Internet is a medium where unlimited information can be shared. Through laptops and PC and social sharing applications like Facebook, Instagram and Youtube can be accessed and this helps the artists and audience share Music between each other. This has helped immensely in the promotion of Indian Classical as now the artists can update about their shows and immediately send it to lakhs of people. Artists can also interact and get feedbacks from their fans. Also with the live feature, people sitting far away can enjoy their favourite artist performing live with just few seconds of delay.
- There are softwares available on computers and laptops which enable long distance Audio and Visual calls. This feature has become very helpful to a student of Indian Classical Music as he/she can now learn anywhere in the world easily by sitting in front of a laptop or a PC and having an Internet connection.
- Indian Classical Music is now being promoted through many social networking and social sharing sites like Youtube and Facebook and they have also become instruments of earning money. A student of Indian Classical can also learn through information and videos available especially for teaching Indian Classical Music. Most of these videos and information are available free of cost and hence the cost of learning has also reduced which is a great help for learning music.
- Computers have also helped in artists promoting their music as one can now broadcast his work to masses easily just by sitting at home. Many acclaimed artist conduct masterclass from their home and through Internet, they can connect to their audience worldwide.

Electronic Tanpura and Tabla

This gadget is a blessing to a learning student of Indian Classical Music. A Tanpura and Tabla is a mandatory requirement for practicing and performing Classical, this gadget contains the sound of Tanpura and Tabla which is electronically generated. The tanpura and Tabla can both be played in any scale and any metre. This has immensely helped the student of Indian Classical as he or she can practice easily on a Tabla machine rather than waiting for a professional tabla player. Moreover, it is very difficult for a beginner in Indian Classical to tune and play a manual Tanpura while singing and learning. With the help of these gadgets, he or she can easily practice anywhere with a properly tuned tanpura and can also have tabla and practice as long as he or she wants.

Midi Interface and Microphones and preamps

Although these are not exactly modern but with advancement of Technology, the size of Midi Interface and Microphones have significantly reduced and these have become very portable. A Midi Interface is a device which when connected to a microphone and the other part connected to the computer, transforms the analog signals into digital signals and the voice can easily be converted into wav format and recorded in the computer. This midi interface is a very portable device which can be carried easily along with the condenser microphone. With the help of this device, one can record and save music or any audio very easily into a computer.

A preamp is a device that fits into the acoustic instruments and converts the musical sounds into digital format to be stored into the computer. It also works by connecting to a midi interface. It is an amazing piece of technology that eliminates the use of microphones for instruments as sometimes microphones can catch un required frequencies and unwanted sounds. Through this device, the sound directly gets converted into digital files and saved into the computer in excellent quality. This is very helpful to the students learning Classical instruments like sitar, violin who can record their instruments and listen or send them to their guru for feedback.

CONCLUSION

Thus we can conclude that without technology by its side, Indian Classical could not have prospered the way it has. It is clear that Hindustani classical music has been loved and accepted all over the world. Innumerable Indian Classical artists are being invited by their fans all around the globe to perform abroad. This has only become possible due to involvement of technology in Indian Classical. Moreover, art is a continuously changing form. It changes with the changing trends in fashion and markets. There have been many art forms which became extinct only because of their rigidity in accepting change. Thus this new phase of Indian Classical Music is prospering through social media interaction and Internet. Many Artists of Indian Classical have turned to Internet marketing and have gained recognition through channels like Youtube and other video sharing softwares. Learning of Indian Classical is also now less challenging as technology has reduced the use of expensive and oversized gadgets, thus reducing costsof learning. Better communication helps in long distance learning and sharing of Knowledge world wide. Through Technology, The live performances and presentations of Ustads and Stalwarts of last generations are intact on the cassettes and CD's and also on video sharing platforms such as Youtube and Facebook. Thus, Indian Classical Music has greatly benefitted by the Introduction of Technology and Internet.

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