

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A KEY TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

DHAKA SUNDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2019, FALGUN 5, 1425 BS 33



COURTESY: A2I

Education in the age of rapid technological advances



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It is quite impossible to ignore the presence of the Internet and its related electronic devices in our day to day life. The age of Internet users is as young as 3 years old. At present, nearly all toddlers have their allocated media time consisting of a few minutes or hours with mobile phones or tabs every day. The purpose is to feed them, keep them quite or provide them with unique knowledge subconsciously, while they are concentrating or entertaining themselves using these gadgets.

In fact, it is not a matter of upper or lower class anymore. Everyone is connected to the Internet to some extent. Despite the positive and negative effects, as the 3rd generation technology succession reached this level, it is quite inevitable that embracing the fusion of technologies is just a matter of time. Embarking on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), technology and market leaders are already forecasting what will be the future trends. These include massive job losses due to automation, 10 percent clothes and spectacles being connected to the internet, mobile phone implants in the human body, 90 percent of people to have unlimited free cloud storage, 10 percent cars to be driverless, cities without traffic lights, 3d printed cars, 3d printed organs, etc. While these dreams are becoming reality, the choice is on us; either we could whimsically wait for this amazing future to happen and see who leads the world, or it is for us to claim a stake to lead the world together.

By choice, with unprecedented effort over the last ten years, Bangladesh has reached developing country status. By 2041, we will become a developed country. But the question is "who will lead that?" The only answer we can come up with is that it will be the young, intellectual, fresh minds of today. Being busy with so-called examinations and numbers throughout the year, teachers and educators seldom know what opportunities and disruptions are waiting for our students. So global leaders are searching for the answer of what our future learners should look like. What vital skills our learners should acquire from school. What should be the future assessment model that will not cover the cognitive level only, but also other major aspects of human development?

In the quest for this answer, last year Access to Information (a2i) Programme organised a few workshops bringing

education experts from ministries, directorates, NCTB, TTC, teachers, academicians, technologists, futurists, designers, journalists, development partners and students together to discuss "Future Education". Experts have opined that a future learner should have attributes of "Being a Solution". A learner will be a solution in her personal, community and global life. To be a solution he/she should have major 8 characteristics of behaviour that can be expressed in short as "6CAP". That indicates a learner will be Creative, Critical Thinker/Problem Solver, Collaborative, Communicative, Change Maker, Citizen (active and global), Adaptive and Productive. Besides, having subject knowledge and occupational training a learner should have 6CAP characteristics that will help him/her to adjust in a new situation and lead the country with others.

To ensure these characteristics in a learner, the teaching learning process, environment, resource, teacher, assessment and overall curriculum must be reshaped. More precisely we need to focus on three most prioritised courses of action which are formative assessment along with interactive teaching learning method, self-motivated and well-trained teachers, and visionary educational leaders to ensure quality education.

Today's educators are focusing more and more on formative assessment (FA) and it is imperative to implement FA in classroom learning. Formative assessment is a continuous evaluation process that helps teachers to teach better and learners to learn better. Various FA tools can be used in the classroom locally and globally such as Think-Pair-Share, Daring Doodles, Roll the Die, Quick summaries, Round Robin Charts, Talk Show Panel, Interview etc. Many more interactive FA tools can be practiced within classroom hour. Besides, formative assessment requires a new set of teaching learning method (TLM).

One very good example of TLM is Project Based Learning (PBL). PBL is a powerful learning process that boosts learner's critical thinking, problem solving, and communication and collaboration skills simultaneously. It takes learners on a cool and extraordinary journey of creativity, exploration that are relevant to the real world. To ensure these FA, PBL and other interactive methods within the classroom we need quality teachers.

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