RESEARCH ARTICLE

INNOVATIVE APPROACH OF TRANSFORMING SUBJECT OF PHOTOGRAPHY INTO A PRACTICAL, SKILL-BASED TOPIC THAT MEETS NEP 2020 STANDARDS

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Manuscript Info	*Abstract*

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One of the key topics in the study of mass communication is photography. It's also one of the most sought-after disciplines among students of all academic backgrounds. However, due to the price of a DSLR camera and the academic feasibility of the topic, it is only being widely introduced at a theoretical level. With the implementation of NEP, we now have the opportunity to make the topic practical and skill-based. One should be able to use a DSLR (Digital Single Reflex lens) camera in order to have a thorough comprehension of the topic. Students must practice taking photos using a DSLR camera for this. In this work, the researcher has attempted to provide Innovative proposals and a road map for making photography an academically viable topic based on his experience.

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Background and Introduction:-

Popular graduate programs in the discipline of Mass Communication are given by SNDT University and Mumbai University. One of the key topics in the said discipline is Photography. Due to a shortage of resources like cameras and studios, the topic is frequently taught conceptually. Additionally, the learner requires a camera in order to practice and learn. For the majority of Mumbai's colleges, teaching theory and compositions is the simple solution. People now think that because smartphones are becoming more and more common, they do not need to purchase pricey cameras. Similarly a student would rather spend their money on a laptop or a mobile device than a camera.

Minimum cost of an entry-level DSLR camera is around Rs.25000/- which is a huge amount of investment for many students. In order to learn photography one should have a DSLR camera and practice with it. For college it is also difficult to maintain and procure equipment. Mass Communication Colleges are largely self-funded or unaided courses. Hence the college's have to make money to sustain themselves and discourage them from any kind of investments. This is also one of the reasons that make college teach the subject at a theoretical level. NEP 2020 is being implemented by the government and has the agenda of skill based and practical training. Under NEP it will be difficult to implement the practical aspect of the course. However, if a few important criteria are taken into account, photography may be used as a practical topic where students' learning can be really made exciting. The field of photography has a vast potential in the modern world, where communication is becoming more visual.

Importance of Photography for Mass Communication
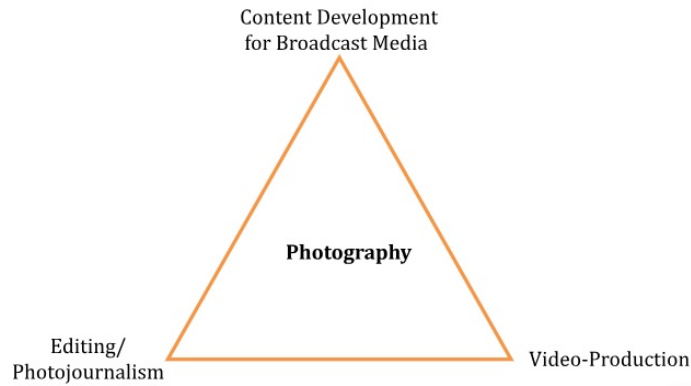
Figure 1:- Indicating the significance of Photography with other subjects.

Because it deals with producing visuals and pictures for a variety of mediums, photography happens to be one of the most essential topics in the field of mass communication. It also has connections to other topics including Photojournalism, Video Production, Content Creation for Broadcast Media and Editing.

The following above (Fig 1) diagram demonstrates how the subject of Photography serves as a foundation and is linked to other subjects as well. Photography is an essential subject since it deals with Composition and Visual Communication.

Ways to make logistics of the course feasible and Practical
Camera for the students
A DSLR camera is essential for practical photography instruction. It is crucial for students to have a camera since they need to practice using it.The student won't purchase a camera if they are not as enthusiastic. The best course of action for students is to purchase refurbished or used cameras. Refurbished equipment is now accessible online. There is a dedicated market for secondhand cameras in a city like Mumbai. Students may get an entry-level DSLR camera for as little as 5000 rupees. More so than ever, students can sell their cameras and lenses to new batches of students enrolling in the program. Students might recover there money in this manner and the equipment is available for usage.

College/Institute should procure lights & other equipment's
Most beginner photographers at this level will be working in bright daylight. But the institute need to provide students with a lighting setup consisting of three lamps. Where students ought to be allowed to workout with lights. There are also new LED lights available at a significantly lower cost. Modern lights are reliable, tough, and safe for use by kids. Students complete their responsibilities and assignments with discipline if correct SOP's (Standard Operating Practice) rules are properly followed.

Use of online Video recorded lecture or Blended learning
Colleges have an extremely tough job getting the teachers to teach every time. In this situation, colleges and universities can employ a mixed learning strategy. Students may be given links to free YouTube videos that may be found online or videos that can be recorded. Young children learn cameras more rapidly by engaging with their peers, it has also been discovered. For students, learning also becomes entertaining. The students will benefit from the tasks properly organized, going from simple to complex. A special offline session can be arranged for students once a month.

Setting objectives of the Course
Setting proper objectives leads to achieving expected goals. Following could be the main objectives of the Photography course in the light of having wholistic practical & Skill Based approach:
1.   Understand the art and science of Photography
2.   Handle a DSLR and point & shoot Camera
3.   Capture Picture in available lighting condition

4.   Appreciate the application of Photography

Expected Outcome
Until and unless expected outcomes are reflected in the behavior and conduct of the student, the course objectives could not be achieved. Hence, we need to have a clear vision and understanding of the same. Following could be the expected outcomes designed for practical approach:
1.   Students should know how the camera works and the aesthetics of composition
2.   They should achieve the skills and techniques
3.   They should practice photography at different time and situations
4.   Develop a complete understanding and use it the best possible way

Achieving the objectives through Assignment Model
The objectives set for the photography course could be achieved by giving assignments to students for understanding the functions and use of various settings in camera. Popular Assignments like Depth of Field, Focus, Portraits, landscape & Table-Top should be given to the students. These assignments should be completed under the guidance of the expert faculty and should be completed using Google-Class room in light of SOPs. Following diagram represents that how the desired goals/objectives could be achieved by giving the proper and relevant assignments.
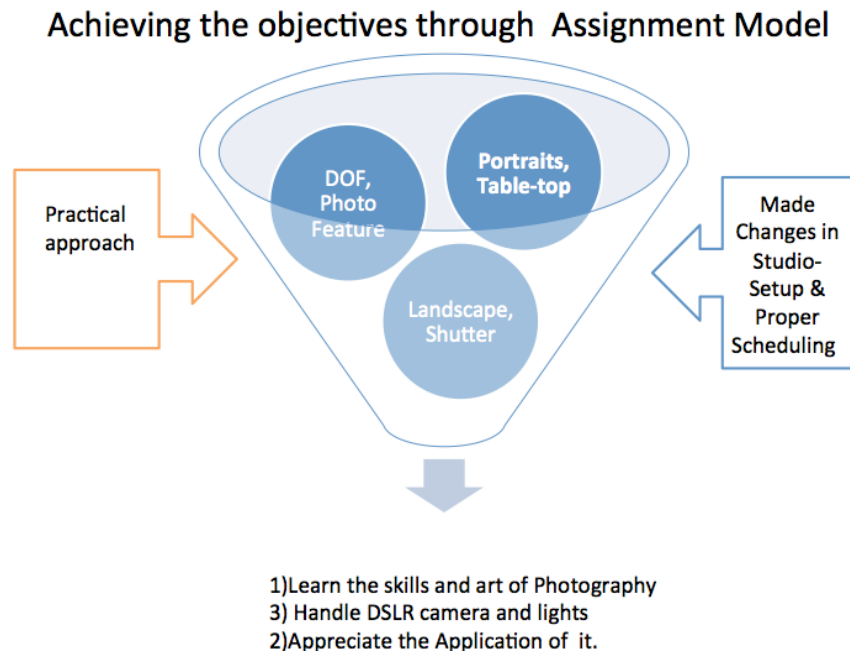
Figure 2:- Indicating the Achievement of Objectives through Assignment Model.

Why 100% Practical Approach was important for photography subject?
1.   The students get only 3 months (approx.) to complete the course.
2.   Students should be able to work (get Skills) with a DSLR camera and lights
3.   Students should feel convenient and enjoy the art of photography (Tech. friendly)
4.   They should be able to apply/use it for other subjects also

Changes/requirements to be fulfilled by the college/institute for the course
1.   Develop SOPs for behavior in the practical class and using the equipment.
2.   Procured lights and cameras which are student friendly
3.   Rearrange the studio set-up or lighting equipment, so that students access to the equipment is quick.
4.   Developed schedule for Assignment's submission on Google Classroom or any other popular platform.

Guidelines for Developing Assignments
1.   In every Assignment students should learn/master a certain function of the camera.

2. By completing all the assignments students explore major functions of the camera.
3. Students also learned to do lighting setup in the studio.
4. They choose their own subjects/models to be photographed.
5. Faculty should teach/Demonstrate and the queries are solved before the shoot or provide the learning material in flipped mode
6. There is No faculty interference in completing the assignments. How-ever students can help each other in lighting and production.
7. Each student should have different subject/topic.

Some of the Positive observations were noted after implementing Photography course with practical approach
1. Students got there family members/friends for studio assignments. They worked hard and maintained discipline to create there good impressions.
2. Students chose interesting spots and locations for clicking images. They formed their own groups to carry on the assignment activity
3. Students came up with new Ideas and innovative ways. (No Language Barrier)
4. The students demonstrated very good group behavior. (Make-up, dressing and lighting)
5. Because there was no theory, students took the assignments as fun activities and enjoyed doing it.
6. All the students developed the confidence/Skills of using the camera effectively.
7. The subject also helped to contribute to other media related subjects.

Feedback from students who have done the course as per the above suggestions. Small feedback Google form was being field-up by TY students in 2021-2022.
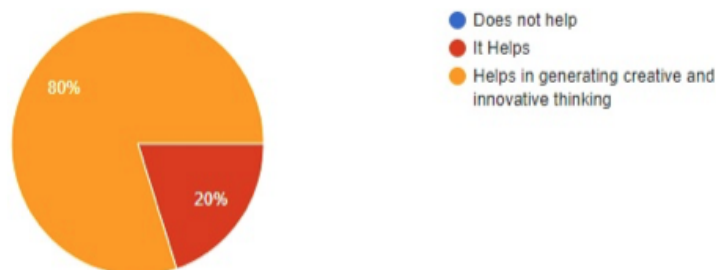
Briefly the findings are indicated by following diagrams:
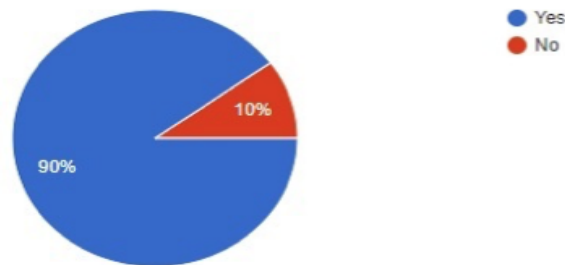
Figure 3:- 90% Students believed Photography has helped in understanding other media related subjects.

Figure 4:- 80% Students believed the 100% practical approach have helped in generating the skills like creative & innovative thinking.

Do you belive the "Fundamentals of Photography" subject has contributed in your skills while working or doing internships ?
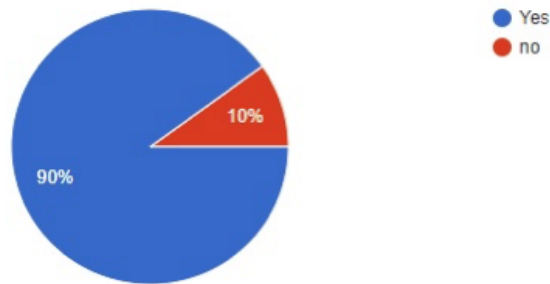
Figure 5:- 90% Students believed the skill acquired during the course were useful while doing internships

Conclusion:-

Photography is a crucial subject and it give best results when students get hands on experience. the process of taking a good picture is very interesting for students. they always come-up with good ideas with reference to costume, location, properties etc. Directly or indirectly Photography contributes to all the subjects. now a days everyone has a camera in their pockets in form of smart phone hence everyone is curious to know the best method of taking pictures. Younger generation is watching more visuals and is reading less. In social medias they are also contributing more in the form of visuals. Hence inputs of photography help students to develop in a multifaceted way.

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   •   https://www.youtube.com/c/MangoStreet
   •   https://www.youtube.com/user/seantuckermerge
   •   https://www.youtube.com/c/PhotographyCourse.