

The Labyrinth of Learning: Epistemic Authority, Ethical Responsibility and Informal Learning in a Digitally Regulated World through Dark (2017–2020)

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ABSTRACT:

This research looks at Netflix series Dark (172-184) as an example of an educational learning processes, epistemic authority and ethical responsibility in digitally mediated context. This study explores the emerging issues in educational theory from how learning happens in informal, networked situations categorized by epistemic inequality to fractured authority and limited possibilities in ethical decision making. The study situates the series within educational research, theorising Dark (172-184) as an informal learning system in which individuals acquire, analyse and act on information through archives, digital infrastructures and irregular power structures. Methodologically, the research adopts an interpretative qualitative analysis, considering the series as an educational case study to investigate learning patterns, educational authority and epistemic mediation. Drawing on critical pedagogy, philosophy of education and social theory particularly the work of Freire, Foucault, Giroux, Biesta and Castells, the study shows that Dark (172-184) depicts learning as cyclical, unequally distributed and morally limited. The study argues that learning in Dark (172-184) unfolds as a labyrinthine process characterized by recurrent routes, fragmented information and ethical uncertainty rather than straight advancement toward knowledge. Rather than taking students straight to the truth, each endeavour to gather information creates new corridors of uncertainty, making navigation a crucial exercise.

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1. Introduction

Education is no longer limited to the classrooms, textbooks or formal learning

systems in the 21st century. Individuals learn a lot through digital spaces, media platforms and

stories narrated in the films or television shows, this change has brought more focus on informal mediums of learning which are outside the established institutions of learning like schools and universities. Through different lens researchers are trying to understand how information spreads and how society learns through this digital and media content that they are exposed to almost every day of their lives. Televisions shows, movies and podcasts have now become an important learning tool, these forms of media not only bring to light the realities of today's world but also help in shaping how people understand those realities. Popular media influences ideas about who controls information, how it is shared, how people learn from it and how authorities affect the thinking of the viewers. In this way popular media becomes an informal learning space where information provided through them form the opinions and affects the decision making of the viewers. Even with the increasing interest in informal learning methods, educational research has not completely explored how popular media can also act as learning environments. Digital storytelling which expands across seasons or episodes also has an impact on the viewers and works an informal learning environment which shapes the opinions of the people watching them.

Netflix's *Dark* (172-184) presents an especially analysis. While often regarded as a science fiction story about time travel, the series is also concerned with how information is created, hidden, communicated and weaponized. Characters on the series are mostly portrayed as students exploring fragmented archives, contradicting given explanations and questioning rigid systems of power established in the series. Learning process in the series never leads to the mastery of the art or to any sort of freedom; it rather produces confusion and keeps the existing power systems in place. Therefore, *Dark* (172-184) can be easily studied as an example of informal learning system which reflect significant educational difficulties in the present digital age. Looking at the series through an educational lens takes the focus

away from narrative and puts it on the pedagogical questions: (1) what types of learning are made difficult or impossible at any point? (2) How is knowledge transmitted through different channels? And (3) what types of ethical duties come into play with restriction based leaning? This makes the series a very relevant educational case study because it helps one investigate how learners/students navigate moral responsibility, ambiguity and power structures in digitally facilitated world.

Taking insights from educational philosophy and critical pedagogy, this study helps us in understanding that the process of learning in the series is deeply influenced by uneven power relations, chronological displacements and characters limited access to the whole truth. Since learning in the series is so fragmented and there is a recurrent battle to gain knowledge which affects the process of obtaining information and makes it delayed, at times incomplete or withholds it strategically. Settings like this points towards the moderns digital learning systems in which an individual has to navigate through huge data overload, navigate algorithms and search for truth in a conflicting digital world without any clear epistemic authority. When we look at *Dark* (172-184) through these different lens we get a clear picture of how it serves as a cultural metaphor for uncertain learning environment, unclear monitoring and most importantly epistemic inequality in the digitally facilitated world.

Beyond its picture of informal learning, *Dark* (172-184) imagines education as a metaphorical labyrinth. Learning, like the traditional labyrinth, does not advance directly from ignorance to conviction. Instead, students frequently discover dead ends, hidden passageways and incomplete revelations that need on going interpretation. Every endeavour to achieve comprehensive simultaneously creates additional ambiguity. In this regard, the labyrinth serves as an educational metaphor for today's digital learning settings, where information is copious but fragmented, authority is concealed, and critical navigation is valued more highly than gaining knowledge.

This research helps us in understanding how failed knowledge/education systems create a learning environment that is controlled by digital and restricted information in which knowledge is not always trustworthy. It also helps in explaining how learners learn in such environments and how it only leads to only confusion on their end. Information only gets delayed in these learning environments and is controlled by powerful systems or hidden authoritative figures who decide when and how to reveal the information to the learners. The study focuses on answering three main research questions- it asks how learning process is organized and controlled in certain learning environments, focuses on how authority over knowledge decides how knowledge is revealed to the learners and lastly talks about the consequences of moral responsibilities and limitations faced by the learners when they try to understand and use the limited knowledge given to them.

2. Methodological Framework

This research has used qualitative and interpretative methods which are frequently used in educational studies, instead of studying *Dark* (172-184) only as television show with certain themes, this research looks at its setting as an educational learning environment. The narrative of the story acts like a symbolic space where ideas such as learning process, knowledge and power and transmission of knowledge through various mediums are emphasized. This makes this series a suitable example for studying informal learning environments where learners can learn through the narrative of the story, the setting of the story, symbols used in the story and through different ways information is shared in the story. This helps in developing interpretative skills, ethical thinking and the ability to judge the credibility of information given to the learners.

In this way, *Dark* (172-184) serves as a simulated learning environment in which characters and viewers confront complicated information systems that need interpretation, doubt and accountability. The approach focuses

on narrative structure (particularly its labyrinthine temporal architecture), wise actors (figures of authority), learning materials (archives and records) and learner paths (character development), the narrative is thus studied as a symbolic educational labyrinth, with movement through time paralleling learners' travel along fractured epistemic routes rather than linear educational progress. These structures are analysed through the lenses of critical lens and through philosophy of education with an emphasis on power dynamics, controlled information and agency. By locating the analysis inside educational research rather than media studies alone, the work adds to interdisciplinary educational inquiry while remaining focused on learning, knowledge and educational responsibility.

Important events from all three seasons were selected based on how they portray learning process, transmission of knowledge and ethical decision making. Attention was paid to repetitive objects in the story like archives, written instructions and old records. Thematic interpretative method was used which helped in deeper understanding of the meanings behind certain events and also in understanding how knowledge is presented in the series. Use of certain key terms like hidden curriculums and epistemic authority have been used and defined, epistemic authority refers to archives, records or digital systems through which knowledge is provided to the learner and hidden curriculum refers to the unspoken rules and expectations that are applied on the learners which shapes their behaviour and limits their understanding of the knowledge provided.

Theoretical framework used to analyse *Dark* (172-184) uses different educational thinkers to explain how the process of learning works in the series. Paulo Friere's concept of 'banking model' helps to explain how learning in the series is not a direct process but happens through archives, old recording or instructions given to the characters. Control over information and how that control influences the lives and thinking of the characters can be explained by Foucault's idea of power and

knowledge. Giroux concept of 'hidden curriculums' helps in understanding how learners pick up values and beliefs indirectly from the learning process, they are not taught these values but they learn them as they continue their journey through the educational systems. The importance of ethics and the idea of how learning shapes the behaviour and identity of the learner is explained through the ideas of Gert Biesta. The concept of networked learning where information is spread across different connections and what are the consequences of operating in those networks is explained by Castells theory. merging all these ideas together help us understand how learning is not just about gaining information but is also a powerful and moral process especially in educational systems where knowledge is controlled and restricted by the few in authority.

The study is divided into four main themes- the first theme focuses on how knowledge is controlled through pre stored information and how archives provide incomplete understanding of the given information, the second theme discusses hidden curriculums and hidden authorities behind those curriculums and how they influence the lives of the learners, the third theme looks at networked learning and how information flows through different networks/connections yet remains incomplete and confusing when received by the learner and the fourth themes talks about ethical responsibility and agency of the learner focusing on how learners must deal with ethical dilemma of choices while trying to understand and use the knowledge provided to them.

3. Controlled Learning: Archives, Inherited Knowledge and the Educational Labyrinth

Learning in Dark (172-184) is consistently controlled rather than being relaxed, it takes place through documentations rather than human interaction. Knowledge flows through diaries, pictures, maps, letters, family documents and instructional texts that the learner is presented with and defines the terms of understanding it. These documents serve as mapping documents which define what may be

revealed to the learner, in what sequence and hence they act as agents of regulating interpretations. This makes access to information in the series as an inherited information rather than information that is gained through inquiry or assistance, instituting these mapping documents as a form of epistemic authorities.

The archives act similarly to the walls of a labyrinth. Rather than preventing movement completely, they carefully control which paths are visible and which are hidden. Learners continue to go through the system, believing they are freely acquiring information, despite the fact their pathways have already been predetermined by inherited papers and secret authority. Paulo Freire's "banking model" in critique of education talks about this dependency in which information acts as a fixed commodity which gets stored in passive learners through such documents. Instead of questioning the information they are provided the characters are just given information in varied forms with certain comprehensive explanations, 'A Journey Through Time' being one example of it in the series. This book is written by one of characters in the series and it gets repeatedly mentioned throughout the series as a document that holds all the answers for the characters. This book presents itself as an authoritative educational work but also conceals not only its author but also any historical context or any ideological motives behind it.

The book in the series therefore restricts any critical engagement and the learner just becomes a recipient of information rather than a co-producer of information. This is how guided learning works, the education potency stems from its perceived neutrality and it creates circumstances where the learner becomes a victim of epistemic reliance. Characters in the series are forced to trust the archives that they are presented with even if they cause confusion, provide limited information or lead to deadly situations for the learner. Therefore, knowledge is something that is accessed rather than being something that is questioned and learned. This strengthens the hierarchy and keeps the people

who control knowledge in power. Learner's incapacity to question sources of information reduces the epistemic agency and makes the learner act on incomplete knowledge even though the learner thinks he has all of it. This dynamic is exactly the issue that the larger educational system faces in regards to curriculum management, power of distributing it and the unspoken assumption controlled by teaching materials.

In the series the archival information is unevenly distributed which results in epistemic omission, characters lack access to vital documents or proper learning get trapped in the fractured reality are unable to fully engage in the series and therefore are exempted from meaning making. This imbalance is also present in the modern mediated knowledge systems which ultimately lead to inequality. This kind of system prioritizes only a certain group of individuals and marginalizes the rest. When this series is looked at from an educational research standpoint is a convincing example of how access to information, literacy of an individual and epistemic justice is a part of a structure and is interrelated, and how control over any knowledge infrastructure directly influences learning outcomes.

Considering all the aspects the series portrays a learning environment in which archival knowledge is given more importance than discussion, authority over the information diminishes the ability to inquire and limited access to information hampers complete comprehension. By bringing to light the repercussions of indirect controlled information this series provides a critical lens on longstanding educational issues mostly pedagogy, knowledge and power transmissions in educational networks.

4. Indirect Knowledge: Learning through Records and Stored Information

The process of learning in *Dark* (172-184) is not something that happens through general conversations, discussions or through lived experiences instead most the information is passed down through photographs, journals,

maps, letters and family records. Sometimes the characters are presented with written instructions from their future selves; these materials guide the characters and their actions and build their understanding of the events. These items act like educational tools as they decide what the characters can learn and teach them how to interpret the information provided to them. In this way learning process in the series is more about understanding and decoding the information that already exists rather than discovering new knowledge through exploration or research.

The way knowledge is shared in the series is similar to the "banking model" proposed by Paulo Freire, in this model knowledge is fixed and is simply presented to the students who just receive it without questioning it and therefore they do not contribute in any way to the process of knowledge creation. Students inherit the information given to them which is pre-prepared and therefore difficult to challenge. The book 'A Journey Through Time' in the series is a good example of this situation, it is shown as an important and trustworthy piece of information but it does not clearly tell who wrote it or when it was written. Characters believe whatever information is written in this book not because they have experienced it or discussed it but only because the book keeps appearing multiple times in front of them throughout the different seasons. Such repetition makes information believable and normal which stops the characters from questioning its credibility.

This type of learning when looked at through the educational viewpoint make the characters too dependent on recorded information; they are indirectly forced to trust the documents and records presented to them even when these records are incomplete and confusing. The characters have no means of checking where the information comes from and therefore the idea of questioning it does not even come into play. They do not discuss or critically analyse this information with each other because of which they lose their ability to think independently and learning just becomes a process that is

controlled by individuals who have access to important and complete information. This leads to characters just accepting what is told to them rather than them trying to understand why things are unfolding the way they are.

Access to information is also not equally distributed in the series, some characters have important documents and records which gives them more power to lead and explain certain events while the other characters who do not have access to the same remain confused or trapped in dreadful situations. This point towards larger problems related to the present education system such as unequal access to information or knowledge, half literacy and unfairness in learning. Through this the series shows that how inequality is created when knowledge is controlled by a few people, this leads to information becoming more important than having the ability to think critically and understand it.

When taken together, *Dark* (172-184) provides a powerful depiction of learning shaped by indirect information and epistemic mediation. By emphasizing archives as locations of authority and exclusion, the series prompts critical thought about how educational systems shape knowledge transmission, limit access and distribute epistemic power. In doing so, it is consistent with existing educational research on the ethical and political elements of learning, particularly in situations when mediation replaces discussion and authority replaces comprehension. As a result, the educational environment depicted in *Dark* (172-184) resembles a labyrinth of inherited knowledge, with students spending more time navigating existing material than creating new understanding. Educational achievement is thus determined not by memorization, but by the capacity to critically understand complicated and sometimes contradicting information systems.

When we look at all these ideas together, it shows how the series points towards the fact that learning is controlled indirectly by presented information and recorded material.

Archives and old records become powerful sources of knowledge and they restrict some individuals from gaining full understanding of the information provided to them which makes one question how education systems most of the time control the means of knowledge, its access and the power to explain it. The series also connects with educational studies that points towards moral and political sides of learning, it shows that learning becomes more about following authority rather than understanding when individuals only depend on recorded information rather than creating it.

5. Hidden Control, Unspoken Lessons and Authority in Learning Process

Authority in the series is not usually shown through direct manipulation of power instead it works in a systematic teaching-like way which is done by controlling how information is shared with the characters. Protagonist like Adam and Eva not only guide others to understand the events which are unfolding but also make others obey them, their power comes from deciding what information should be shared with which character and to what extent. They make the information believable which makes other characters act according to their will, in this way they act more like teachers because they control the learning process while mostly staying hidden as authority figures. Information is not completely hidden from other characters but it's slowly revealed and given to them in a planned order. This makes the characters believe that they are learning and discovering things on their own when their learning is actually being very carefully controlled and navigated.

Dark's (172-184) secret authority resembles labyrinth builders. Rather of publicly constraining mobility, they dictate the viable avenues for learning. Characters have the appearance of spontaneous discovery despite the fact that their educational journey has previously been meticulously planned by those who control access to information. This type of hidden authority is also similar to the idea of power and knowledge proposed by Michael

Foucault. According to him, power does not always control individuals through force instead it works by controlling what people believe to be true. In the series, knowledge controls how people see and interpret the events, it influences their actions and even shapes their desires while making them believe that they are doing so on their own free will. Characters are always in dilemma that they are making smart and informed choices but they do not realise that they are working within the limits of the incomplete knowledge that is provided to them by the authority controlling its access; this makes the authority less visible and more internal. This stops the characters from becoming free thinkers and makes them puppets of the authority who gives them limited information.

Adam and Eva in the series control people by showing them that they have special knowledge and wisdom which they have attained through years of experience. They share with other characters with limited information and only small parts of the truth in order to make them act a certain way, they purposefully delay full explanations so that other characters keep depending on them for guidance and they remain in the position of authority. Knowledge in the series is always delayed and never fully revealed until the end, empty promises of everything making sense one day encourages the characters to keep following the intrusions given to them by these people of authority. This is very similar to some education systems where students are told to move ahead step by step as they are directed and if they keep progressing understanding will come eventually.

The concept of 'hidden curriculum' given by Henry Giroux helps explain this situation. Hidden curriculum defines lessons that are not openly taught and which people learn indirectly, this involves values, belief systems and social expectations. Characters in the series learn ideas like fate, duty, sacrifice and inevitability of life on their own, Jonas especially mid series starts to learn that suffering is necessary, obedience to the instruction is must and that personal loss is something which is beneficial for unfolding

future events, he is not taught these ideas or he does not learn these ideas by deeply thinking about them instead he learns them through repetitive experience which makes me also believe in the fact that following rules leads to rewards and that questioning the authority can create undesirable problems.

This type of authority works silently and makes people believe they have freedom to make their own decisions and are learning from those decisions. Jonas throughout the series tries to stop the apocalypse and believes that he is choosing his own path and discovering truth through his actions and determination. But in reality, his entire journey is actually pre planned and is controlled by hidden systems that limit his choices. Giroux's hidden curriculum works in a similar manner, as it does not remove the ability to make choices completely but instead reduces the number of choices given to the individuals. This makes one question how learning environments shape peoples thinking indirectly while making them believe that their choices are supported and they have the independence to make those choices. The educational labyrinth thus does not entirely eliminate freedom; rather, it narrows the available pathways until learners' mistake predefined routes for true choice.

In the series authority also operates through time as learning happens in time loops where lessons and events keep repeating themselves. The characters do the question or try to change the knowledge given to them as repetition of the knowledge in these time loops forces them to just accept it. Some educational systems follow a similar pattern where memorization and repetition is given more importance than critical thinking and questioning the information. In the series whenever characters try to rebel and challenge the authority they often becomes even more trapped in the same system which makes them believe that their rebellion is vain and they should move according to the instructions given to them.

Secrecy plays another important part in this of learning system; characters rarely completely

comprehend whatever is being taught to them or why certain things are being taught to them. Modern digital learning system follows a similar technique where technology choose what information can be shown to the students but does not explain the reason behind this half disclosure. Jonas just receives information that fits his role, just like modern learners receive selected information that feels personal but is actually very controlled such systems create customized learning experiences which limit independent thinking.

The series in a way can be seen as a warning about hidden control in the modern educational systems. Authority lies not only in teachers or educational institutions but also in the systems that control access to information, these systems build patience and obedience while discouraging questioning or discussions. Learners get programmed to believe that learning will eventually unfold when they move as directed by the system. This delay in providing full access to the learner reflects concerns about the transparency in technology based education and learning done through them.

The series not only points towards these aspects but also necessitates suffering as a part of learning process. Characters are made to believe that in order to learn and grow they must suffer which will make them stronger. The modern education systems propagate a similar setting where struggle is praised without questioning who benefits from the struggle of the learner. Suffering in the series does not come as a side effect but rather as an important aspect of learning without which learning is incomplete. The characters frequently mistake movement for progress, as if they were seeking to escape a labyrinth. Although they are constantly gathering knowledge, they seldom grow closer to actual epistemic freedom since each new avenue eventually reconnects with the same systems of power. The modern learning systems propagate the same idea where suffering while memorizing and repetition becomes more important than understanding information and critically analysing it.

When looked as a whole the series presents a learning environment where authority is strongest when it's hidden. Power works behind the mask of education and knowledge rather than forcing individuals directly into doing what they demand of them. The series throws light on how education can sometimes control behaviour and shape the thoughts of an individual rather than helping them become independent thinkers. This forces us to think about how modern learning systems especially those connected to technology create inequality, reduce freedom and keep the power systems in position while promoting restricted learning.

6. Learning through the Digital Labyrinth: Time, Networks and Epistemic Navigation

Learning process in *Dark* (172-184) does not follow the established classroom system or just authoritative systems it also follows a complicated network that is connected through links of different time periods, families and spread across generations. Information is shared through written letters by characters to past or future selves, recordings, instructions, warnings or hidden messages rather than directly conversation. Characters learn from these mediums because of which learning goes beyond time and physical presence. Manuel Castell gave a similar concept in which he talked about 'network society,' wherein information and power move through connected systems instead of only being controlled by central authority. In the series not a single character has full understanding of everything.

Characters in power do control the access to information yet they themselves also do not have full understanding of how things proceed. In the series information is spread among different people from different time loops and each character in each time loop only knows small parts of the truth. Therefore, learning is dependent on how characters connect with each other in these time loops, what information they receive and exactly when they receive it. However these connections in the networks do not always bring clarity and are accompanied by confusion as the characters receive incomplete

information. The modern digital learning environment follows a similar dialogue where students learn from different online sources instead of sticking to classroom teachers which sometimes leads to them receiving information without any proper explanation. The interwoven temporal networks convert the series into a digital labyrinth. Unlike traditional educational methods, which presume linear advancement network constantly redirects learners through overlapping paths where knowledge flows without ensuring comprehension.

In the series due to controlled access on information sometimes learn too early or too late which makes understanding in either situation very difficult. Online learning where students watch recorded lectures or uploaded notes without having a direct conversation with the teachers who uploaded them go through a similar situation. While such networked learning helps information travel across time and place but the problems created by such networked learning are also evident. Knowledge shared without moral or emotional understanding individuals end up making harmful decisions without realizing the consequences of those actions which is evident in the series. Such networks therefore promote passing down information without taking emotions or feelings of the receiver into consideration. Miscommunication also adds on this problem as decisions made on half information or half understanding lead to serious consequences for the learner and in the series for the characters. Modern digital learning system puts a learner in a similar situation where they are exposed to half information and are given no opportunity to discuss it or interpret it together.

This causes a strong emotional impact on the learner, in the series relationships break often because communication happens only through recorded messages or documents instead of face to face communication. Characters rely more on these methods of communication rather than relying on personal connections or trusting each other with the information they have. Modern digital systems operate through

this kind of teaching which results in learners losing their emotional connections and depending too much on technology which questions the idea that the more connected you are to technology (learning through various online sources) the more you will learn. In the series more connections lead to confusion and make the characters impaired of decision making, therefore shedding the light on the fact that without ethical thinking these networked learning systems become overwhelming for the learners instead of being helpful.

These networks instead of being helpful at times hide responsibilities, when information is pushed at an individual from many sources it becomes difficult to determine who is to blame for the undesired results of that. Characters in the series follow certain instructions given to them which exactly is what modern education technology does where students follow suggestions and instructions constructed by the digital systems without the awareness of who made them. However, the series does not completely reject the concept of network learning, these networks help the characters to survive in difficult situations and help them pass information across generations and time loops, without these networks learning process in the series would completely stop as there will be no other medium of passing down the necessary information. But the series also points towards the fact that these networks are alone not enough to facilitate learning, learning requires emotional connection, ethical thinking, critical questioning and opportunities to discuss certain ideas. When we let the learning process be dependent on these networks only, it becomes a mechanical process instead of being a meaningful one.

Network learning therefore is both helpful and a risky process, the series points at the fact that learning systems must not focus on connection or networks as that leads to reduced understanding and leaves less ground for moral responsibility. The series puts forth a warning for educators and researchers to think carefully about how digital and networked learning systems operate and how carefully they must be

used. Connection or networks don't always give true understanding, these networks might spread information but without proper human connection and proper discussions the real meaning which makes education a valuable tool is lost. Such labyrinthine settings are becoming common in today's digital schooling. Learners are surrounded by seemingly endless information channels, yet the quantity of options sometimes complicate rather than simplify the hunt for accurate knowledge.

7. Existential Dimensions, Moral Responsibility and Search for Meaning

The series depicts a controlled learning environment where events are pre planned and controlled by time but it still lays importance on responsibility, choice and moral duty which the characters learn through their journeys. The characters are trapped in a system without the awareness of its creator but the responsibility of acting within this system is still their own. In their world learning does not always bring clarity or freedom instead it shows the characters what the consequences of their actions are. They live in a delusion that the more they learn the more responsible they will become which eventually will help them make better decisions. Knowledge therefore in the series does not make the characters feel empowered instead it makes them feel more accountable for their action, every time they learn something new they must also face the moral consequence of that knowledge. From existential standpoint, the labyrinth represents the human quest for meaning in systems that defy total comprehension. Learning then becomes less about finding an exit and more about having the ethical ability to navigate ambiguity in the absence of unambiguous solutions.

Jean-Paul Sartre stated that people are responsible for their own choices even if they did not choose the situations they are in "existence precedes essence". This existential concept is engraved in *Dark* (172-184) as characters cannot escape the system even if they try but they also cannot avoid responsibility for

their actions within it. The comfort of not knowing is removed as they are exposed to information and situations. When they realise the consequences of their actions, they also become aware of the fact that doing nothing is also a choice which has its own consequences. This increases the moral pressure in the characters instead of helping them solve the problem they are facing. Albert Camus' concept of absurd also helps explain this situation, absurd happens when an individual tries to find meaning in systems that do not provide a clear explanation especially when their logical minds cannot explain the suffering that comes along with finding answers. In the series the more he characters learn the more hopeless they become as the concepts of time, cause and effect and repeating events only make their worsen their suffering. Attaining knowledge does not help them instead it makes it clear to them that there is no escape from the system that they are trapped in. Camus says understanding meaningless situations does not remove responsibility in fact it forces people to keep taking actions even when there is no guarantee of the result. The characters keep making choices even though there comes a point where they realise that those choices will not fix anything.

The common belief of education leads to freedom is challenged by various incidents in the series; gaining information does not set the characters free instead it ties them more strongly to the system they so desperately want to escape. Characters are dawned with the realization of every action they take only helps in keeping the cycle in place instead of stopping it. Jonas the protagonist of the series tries desperately to stop this cycle of endless time loops and disorganized generations, he tries to gain all the knowledge to stop the apocalypse in every time dimension that he travels to but fails to do so, every new information acquired and every action that he takes after attaining that information only makes him realise how this was pre-determined and his actions have only continued the cycle instead of breaking it. He not only learns how the widen caves works but

also understands how his own actions help maintain the cycle that they all are trapped in, by the end learning no longer feels like growth or a process of self-discovery for him instead it only causes emotional and moral pain for him. Therefore, learning becomes a heavy responsibility for the characters rather than a simple solution for their problems.

Jonas in at the starting of the series seems very curious and hopeful about finding a solution and learning the truth of the situation but over time every new information he gains only makes him hopeless and increases his load of responsibility on his shoulders. Towards the end Jonas decides to remove himself from existence which can be seen as a rebellion against this learning system that only increases moral pain, his refusal to participate in a system where knowledge leads to control, suffering and sacrifice. His this decision is not because he wants to avoid learning but because he finally understands the consequences of pursuing it further which points towards the danger that learning systems can create when no ethical consideration or emotional wellbeing of the learner is taken into consideration.

This idea is very important for the modern education systems as students are often told that learning will automatically solve their problems. But knowledge can sometimes trap people in situations they cannot control or change, that's when awareness plays a major part but awareness without the power to take actions only becomes painfully stressful for an individual. The series does not glorify Jonas' final decision to remove himself from the system instead it is shown as a sad, quiet and serious decision. His decision does not solve the ethical or moral problems of the systems but it does stop him from repetitively making them. The series therefore puts forth the fact that the best human response to such unfair education systems is to stop participating in them by doing so an individual makes an ethical choice of refusing a knowledge that forces someone to do something unethical.

8. Educational Importance and Research

Value

This study falls under interdisciplinary educational research, it focuses on theoretical and critical studies about learning and teaching indifferent situations. Dark (172-184) can be studied as an informal learning environment which goes beyond the systematic educational systems of schools and universities. It focuses on the idea that an individual also learns through culture, surroundings and media that they are exposed to. The modern digital media acts also as an informal learning which facilitates learning that happens outside formal educational institutions. This research adds to the informal aspect of learning which is life long and is also reflected in modern educational systems. In the series characters mostly learn through indirect means, confusion or at times self-discovery, whatever information they get is shared through systems set in place like documents or old records and not through direct teaching. This is the exact pattern which we see in the modern learning process where students gather information through internet, social media or multiple digital resources. By exploring the ideas of how knowledge is hidden, shared and controlled by authority the research puts emphasis on the importance of fairness and equality when it comes to accessing information or obtaining knowledge. The labyrinth is also useful conceptual paradigm for modern educational studies. Digital learners are increasingly negotiating algorithmic suggestions, fragmented archives, opposing narratives and concealed authority infrastructures. Understanding education as a labyrinth shifts the focus from just acquiring information to learning crucial navigational abilities required for ethical engagement with complicated knowledge settings.

By focusing on ethical responsibility, student independence to inquire and moral reasoning that comes with learning this research becomes a part of critical pedagogy and educational discussions. It suggests that movies and television series can also be useful for studying various aspects of education which fits well with European research traditions that

encourages interdisciplinary thinking and deep theoretical analysis. Modern educational systems especially the ones that are based on digital learning puts the learners in situations where they have face confusing information, unequal access to knowledge and hidden authority. The series simply shows that having access to information does not always lead to proper understanding of that knowledge or even to ethical decision making. That's why there is a need for education systems which focuses on critical digital literacy, fairness in providing knowledge and also takes responsibility for the utilization of the same.

When we look at the narrative from teaching perspective the series raises ethical questions on educational systems that only focus on delivering the information without giving a proper space for discussion or questioning. In the series the characters are often required to sacrifice, have patience or be obedient which gives no space for critical thinking or even for moral reflection which raises important question about what exactly is the purpose of education, should students only adjust themselves to existing systems of learning or question and try to change such systems of learning?

This research helps expand educational theory by showing aspects such as power influence, control and ethical responsibility and their influence on learning process. Instead of treating media just as a form of entertainment, this study on *Dark* (172-184) shows television shows also work as a learning environment where characters struggle with inequality, oppression, authoritative powers and moral responsibility therefore highlighting the importance of awareness along with the importance of independence when it comes to learning.

9. Conclusion

Dark (172-184) portrays how learning is controlled and restricted by digital systems and how learners have unequal access to varied forms of information. In the series knowledge moves through archives, old documents,

networks and mediated systems which are controlled by a few people in authority. Even though information is accessible to the characters, that access does not give them full understanding or independence instead it makes them more dependent on the power systems and keeps the social inequalities in place. Such dependency traps them into the system they are trying to escape and their efforts to change the system go in vain.

The indirect learning system portrayed in the series only delays information and keeps the authority hidden. It highlights one of the problems in our modern education systems. Challenges such as incomplete information, delayed understanding and unequal access to information are what lead to the struggle and suffering of the characters. These challenges are also what learners face in the modern digital learning/educational systems which make learning a process of struggle rather than a medium of empowerment. The series raises questions on what must be done to provide independence in learning process and how the authorities must take responsibility in order to make information networks a reliable source. The complex story of *Dark* (172-184) helps in explain the learning experiences that are difficult to study through classroom research alone, the moral and emotional parts of learning are highlighted in this. Feelings of hope, fear, ethical decision making and confusion are also important parts of learning and understanding knowledge provided to the learner. This helps at focusing on how learning affects responsibility, freedom and decision making in real life rather than just focusing on aspects like freedom and decision making.

The research focuses on only one series therefore its findings cannot be applied to every learning situation. Future research can expand on this idea by studying similar television shows or by studying real learners in digital learning environments, such researches help improve fairness, give equal opportunities and access to learners and put the ethical aspect of learning into picture. To conclude *Dark* (172-184) highlights that education in the digital era is no

more a straight trip from ignorance to knowledge, but rather a complex process of navigating fragmented information, conflicting authority and uncertainty. The educational challenge is not just to increase learners' access to information but also to develop the critical judgement, ethical responsibility and

interpretive abilities required to traverse increasingly complicated knowledge systems. *Dark* (172-184) provides a useful framework for comprehending the realities of informal learning in digitally mediated society by depicting it as labyrinth rather than a straight road.

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