

'STUDENT- CENTERED APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR QUALITY DEVELOPMENT'

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Abstract

Quality education in Higher Education is needed today, so that people living in the society and nation as a whole, acquire the necessary skills and competencies which is required for living significantly in a competitive, global world. High quality education is education that meets the needs of the student and helps in promoting their future growth. A teacher's role becomes very important for enhancing quality education. An effective teacher understands that teaching involves wearing multiple hats to ensure that the school day runs smoothly and all students collect a quality education. To carry about quality education, a shift of focus of activity from the teacher to the learners or often termed as Student-centered approach to teaching and learning is necessary. Student-centered come near includes active learning, cooperative learning, and inductive teaching and learning. This paper attempts to find out the importance of student – centered approach to learning in bringing about quality education in Higher Education.

Key words: quality, student-centered learning.

Introduction

Higher education is the backbone of any society. Higher education includes college and university teaching- leaning towards which students' progress to attain higher educational qualification. It is where in-depth knowledge and understanding is imparted to the students so as to advance to new frontiers of knowledge in different walks of life. It is about knowing more and more about less and less.

Very importantly, it develops the student's ability to question and seek truth and makes him/her competent to critique on contemporary issues thereby broadening the intellectual powers of the individual within a narrow specialization, and also gives him/her a wider perspective of the world around (NAAC, 2006).

According to Ronald Barnett (1992), there are four predominant concepts of higher education

- A) Higher education as the production of qualified human resources: In this view, higher education is seen as a process in which the students are counted as "products" absorbed in the labor market. Thus, higher education becomes input to

the growth and development of business and industry.

- B) Higher education as training for a research career: Here, higher education is preparation for qualified scientists and researchers who would continuously develop the frontiers of knowledge. Quality within this viewpoint is more about research publications and transmission of the academic rigor to do quality research.
- C) Higher education as the efficient management of teaching provision: Many strongly believe that teaching is the core of educational institutions. Thus, higher education institutions focus on efficient management of teaching-learning provisions by improving the quality of teaching, enabling a higher completion rate among the students.
- D) Higher education as a matter of extending life chances: In this view, higher education is seen as an opportunity to participate in the development process of the individual through a flexible, continuing education mode. All these four concepts of higher

education are not exclusive; rather they are integrated and give an overall picture of what higher is in higher education. In short, teaching, research and extension form the three main functions of higher education (NAAC, 2006).

Role of Higher Education in the Society

Higher education is generally understood to cover teaching, research and extension. Higher education is the source or feeder system in all walks of life and therefore supplies the much-needed human resources in management, planning, design, teaching and research. Scientific and technological advancement and economic growth of a country are as dependent on the higher education system as they are on the working class. Higher education also provides opportunities for life-long learning, allowing people to upgrade their knowledge and skills from time to time based on the societal needs. The report of the UNESCO International Commission on Education in the 21st Century titled "*Learning*". The report highlighted the following specific functions of higher education too: **To** prepare students for research and teaching; **To** provide highly specialized training courses adapted to the needs of economic and social life; **To** be open to all, so as to cater to the many aspects of lifelong education in the widest sense; **To** promote international cooperation through internationalization of research, technology, networking, and free movement of persons and scientific ideas.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To provide ideas of student-centered education.
- 2) To raise awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of *TCE* and *SCE*.

Quality Education

'Quality' is a much-debated term. The word quality comes from the Latin word *qualis* meaning 'what kind of'. In the words of Pirsig (1974), Quality ... you know what it is, yet you don't know what it is. But that's self-contradictory. But some things *are* better than others, that is, they have more quality. But when you try to say what the quality is, apart from

the things that have it, it all goes *poof!* There's nothing to talk about it. But if you can't say what Quality is, how do you know what it is, or how do you know that it even exists? If no one knows what it is, then for all practical purposes, it doesn't exist at all. But for all practical purposes it really *does* exist... So round and round you go spinning mental wheels, and nowhere finding any place to get traction. What the hell is Quality? What it is? (p. 179). This implies that quality means different things to different people (NAAC, 2006).

Student-Centered Learning (SCL)

Student-Centered Learning comprised of the following elements (Education International, 2010):

- The reliance on active rather than passive learning;
- An emphasis on deep learning and understanding;
- Increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the student;
- An increased sense of autonomy in the learner;
- An interdependence between teacher and learner;
- Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship; and

Advantages and Disadvantages of Student Centered Learning

Advantages

1. Students develop learning and other skills and gain meaningful knowledge that will help them throughout life.
2. It can help to build social skills and self-esteem.
3. And also students gain more emotional and cognitive support from their peers.
4. The relationship between rights and responsibilities is learned.
5. Students discover that learning is interesting and fun.
6. Teachers have less traditional work to do.
7. Students are more attentive and willing to participate in the class.

8. Complaints about irrelevance and unfairness decrease.
9. Reports and papers generated by students increase a teacher's collection of useful information.
10. The pupil has more of an active role to play in their learning.
11. Students can adapt the way they learn, to make their studies more effective.
12. The ideal situation for this type group work is that weaker students should be placed with more able students to act as scaffolding.
13. Students work on projects or problems in teams with both personal and team accountability for conceptual understanding.
14. Students work together in achieving goals by upholding the norms of the group.
15. Students are actively helping and motivating spirit to succeed together.
16. Active role as peer tutors to further enhance the group's success.
17. Interaction between students with increasing their ability to argue.

Disadvantage

1. It requires a longer time for students so it is difficult to achieve curriculum targets.
2. Take a long time for teachers so that teachers in general do not want to use cooperative learning.
3. It requires special skills of teachers so that not all teachers can do or use of cooperative learning.
4. Specific nature of student demands, such as the nature likes to work together.

Conclusion

Quality education is a prerequisite for national, regional and global development. For delivery of quality education, quality teachers who are committed to teaching and equipped with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for effective teaching is needed. Teachers must give a thought of adopting student-centered approach of teaching so as to bring about quality education in higher education.

References

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