

STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING: AN EFFECTIVE TOOL IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of student centered learning has been credited as early as 1905 to Hayward and Dewey's work (O, Sullivan, 2003). Many Philosophers explain it in terms of shift of power from teacher's expertise to the importance being given to need of learner and making the whole teaching learning process as more of activity centered and student oriented process. Teacher acting as a Facilitator rather than a knowledge provider (Simon, 1999). Now the education is more focused on the student's learning thus making him more active, responsible participants in their own learning and with their own pace of learning and the process of learning more interesting. Student-centered learning allows students to actively participate in discovery learning processes from an autonomous viewpoint.

Many terminologies have been linked with student centered learning such as flexible learning (Taylor 2000), experiential learning (Burnard 1999), child centered learning and self-directed learning. Therefore the slightly overused term 'student-centered learning' can be used differently by different people.

The focus of learning is to gain information as it is proctored to the student, providing rationale as to why rote learning or memorization of teacher notes or lectures was the norm a few decades ago. On the other hand, student-centered classrooms are now the norm where active learning is strongly encouraged. Students are now researching material pertinent to the success of their academia and knowledge production is seen as a standard. In order for a teacher to facilitate a student-centered classroom, he or she must become aware of the diverse backgrounds of his or her learners.

ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

Student centered learning appears as a imitations of today's society which reflects its thought in democracy as important concept. It wants its student to be as a practical thinker rather than a passive follower thus envisaging the society as made of practical thinkers and rationales.

According to James Henderson, there are three basic principles of democratic living, which he says are not yet established in our society in terms of education. The three basic tenets, which he calls the 3S's of teaching for democratic living, are:

- (Subject Learning)- Students learn best from subject matter thoughtfully presented.
- (Self-Learning)- One must engage oneself in the generative process.
- (Social Learning)- Empathy is wealth in this regard, social interaction with diverse others the target for generosity.

Many educationalists are of the view that student centered learning is more effective in bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and practical applications so as to improve the quality of teaching learning process. It has a deep impact on facilitating assimilation of core knowledge and reflection and recall in the long term. To be considered a student-centered learning environment it has to be open, dynamic, trusting, respectful, and promote children's subjective as well as objective learning styles.

Even while teaching the higher classes it is not always preferred to always follow the lecture method. Slow, thoughtful, reflective transitions to student-centered learning approaches are likely to lead to the most sustainable changes in teaching. Faculty members might begin with informal cooperative learning approaches: think-pair-share (Lynam, 1981), Quick-thinks (Johnston & Cooper, 1997), and minute papers (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Stead, 2005). Allen and Tanner (2005) recognize seven strategies ranging from simple, easily implemented approaches to complex restructurings of the entire course.

- Booked lectures
- Immediate Feedback via Classroom Technology
- Student Presentations and Projects
- Learning Cycle Instructional Models
- Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL)
- Incorporating Inquiry into Courses
- Problem-Based Learning and Case Studies

It is more essential to consider the effectiveness of the allocated student centered learning whether at the memory level, understanding level or reflective levels of teaching learning process.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

It is unquestionable that the relationship of teacher and student has its impact on the process of teaching learning process. Both the learner and the teacher involved are humans where emotions play an important role in retention of knowledge, conceptualization of phenomenon and future behavior (Seabrook 2004). The literature on adult education similarly illuminates the effects of relationships on learning of explicit curricular content (Tiberius, 2002: Westberg, 1992).

Especially important is whether a student has a prevention and promotion focus. A student with a prevention focus is especially sensitive to negative outcomes, seeks to avoid errors, and is driven by security concerns, while a student with a promotion focus is more sensitive to positive outcomes. Learning is enhanced when there is regulatory fit, when fit when the manner of in which a student engages in an activity sustains their goal orientation or interests regarding that activity.

Teacher forms an effective environmental resources and an interesting content presentation to make the learning conducive and favorable for the learner. Learning, memory, and reasoning are enhanced when students have the opportunity to perceive and interact with real-world examples. Thus, simulations and problem solving activities can play a valuable role in promoting understanding and recall. These conditions are promoted by the teacher.

CONCLUSIONS

The changing trends of 21st century, education have changed the way in which we think, work and interact in pedagogic settings. Today we are not satisfied by ‘what’ we deliver but ‘how well’ we deliver. As in rapidly changing times the approach is more of consumer centered even in educational field. One of the main reasons teachers resist student-centered learning is the view of assessment as problematic in practice. Since teacher-assigned grades are so tightly woven into the fabric of schools, expected by students, parents and administrators alike, allowing students to participate in assessment is somewhat contentious.

This approach is more controlled by the teacher in their presentation and outcome (Davis and Harden 1999). However, it is useful in addressing the active learning aspect of student-centered learning. Other approaches to curriculum design also support the idea of student choice and activity in learning, for example, the systems-based approach, resource-based learning, and experiential/ personal relevance approach (Toohey, 2000).

Student-centered learning, despite its popularity, is not without its critics. The main critique of student-centered learning is its focus on the individual learner. In addition, there are some difficulties in its implementation, i.e. the resources needed to implement it, the belief system of the students and staff, and students’ lack of familiarity with the term.

But the approach is gaining its popularity worldwide and it is worth mentioning that in spite of its few limitations it will soon be a concept widely accepted not only in the developed countries but also which are developing.

REVIEW

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