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Blended learning for Gen Z: Smart practice for smart learners

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Abstract

The aim of education should be to teach how to think rather than what to think- to improve the cognitive thinking so it enables us to think of ourselves and goals of the life. In education, the increasing awareness of the learner-centered, teaching-learning process has generated a lot of attention towards the learners, how long they keep the content learn, how they conceptualize the content and how they help themselves to organize their knowledge to enhance meaningful learning. In 21st century, the learner centered approach is needed to be emphasized, i.e. we have to shift the focus from teacher to the learner. This can be done by using a blended learning technique. The student –centered method focuses on the skill development and enables the lifelong learning also. The base of the constructive approach depends upon the meta-cognitive knowledge and meta-cognitive learning. This can be evolved by using the innovative method of teaching which aims to promote learning in communication with teachers and active participation of the learners. It helps to foster the skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking among the learners.

Keywords: Sympathetic activity, pregnancy, PIH

Introduction

The aim of education should be to teach how to think rather than what to think- to improve the cognitive thinking so it enables us to think of ourselves and goals of the life. In education, the increasing awareness of the learner-centered, teaching-learning process has generated a lot of attention towards the learners, how long they keep the content learn, how they conceptualize the content and how they help themselves to organize their knowledge to enhance meaningful learning. As per Times of India, (2014, Jan 06) the primary school students spend 800-1000 hours per year in India, this is the maximum of all countries of the world like China, Korea, Japan, Australia, France, England and even Finland which provides exemplary approach in education to the world. Then why our quality of education suffers? It is the question of deep concern.

It is also discussed by there is an unsatisfactory level of student learning, one of the key challenges being faced by the Indian education system. There is a quality-related deficiencies at each stage of education resulting in an unsatisfactory level of student learning-both scholastic and co-scholastic/non-cognitive. There is an increasing concern about the quality of education that the system is able to provide. The distribution of the students on the basis of the percent of scores obtained by the students who participated in the NAS 2010 (National student's academic survey) of class V, suggest that learning achievement of a significant proportion of students at the primary stage of education does not measure up to the expected levels. Though the overall mean scores in Language for class V was 56.06, about one-third (31.5 %) of students obtained scores of 40 % and below. While the overall mean scores in Mathematics for class V was 53.23, about 35.8% of students obtained scores of 40% and below. Similarly, while overall mean scores in Environmental studies (EVS) were 53.39%, about 35.1 % of students obtained scores of 40% and below. The phenomenon of under-achievement among pupils reflects the quality-related deficiencies facing the education system. Despite important progress, the input mix and the educational processes in schools remain deficient resulting in unsatisfactory levels of student learning. The unsatisfactory levels of student learning underscore the fact that fostering quality education should be the key focus of attention in the coming years.

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It is a matter of discussion often as whether the quality of education in public run institutes are adequate or lack behind because they are unable to develop the scientific attitude among the students. There are many factors which are responsible for all these. So, it is the duty of the privileged sections of the community to substantiate the work in schools which lacks the facilities and introduce the innovative method of teaching also. For-example schools can be collaborated with one of the teacher trainee institute and initiate different learning styles and method of teaching into lesson-plans of the teachers. This brings the new approach to teaching and learning, and help as an excellent source of learning also.

Learning Styles

Everyone has a different way of learning. Each one prefers different styles and techniques of learning. An individual's learning style refers to the way how an individual absorbs, how he processes, how he comprehends and how he retain the information. These learning styles are found by an educational theorist Neil Fleming, using multiple learning and multiple intelligence for learning as new approach. This approach is one that the educators have recently recognized. Traditional learning includes only linguistic and logical teaching methods. They use a limited range of learning and teaching techniques. Many schools still rely on the book-based teaching, repetition and preserved exams for reinforcement and review. As a result, we prefer those learning styles and techniques which are less in favour now days.

By recognizing and understanding own learning styles we emphases the speed and quality of learning. This change may bring the new learning, experience, information about the words we use in daily life. Researchers used brain-imaging technologies that have been able to find out the key areas of the brain responsible for each learning style.

Method of teaching

To make the teaching and learning effective, the aims must be clear, material of the instruction must be based on pupil's need and the environment must be conducive. Teaching and learning can only be run simultaneously, if way of doing things is skilful and rapidly. The spirit of modern teaching stresses not only the growth of the teacher but also in the improvement of learning situations and participation of the learner.

The value of cognitive aspect is basically determined by the teachers. Various method of teaching has been made to engage the students in the learning, but all are not relevant to their lives. There are a number of innovative techniques one of them is blended learning which helps the learner to create interest and develop the scientific attitude among pupil towards science. As every aspect of the lesson can be represented in the pictorial form through, which pupils can relate their information with their existing knowledge.

Professionalism in teaching and learning

In 21st century, the learner centered approach is needed to be emphasized, i.e. we have to shift the focus from teacher to the learner. This can be done by using a blended learning technique. The student –centered method focuses on the skill development and enables the lifelong learning also. The base of the constructive approach depends upon the meta-cognitive knowledge and meta-cognitive learning.

This can be evolved by using the innovative method of teaching which aims to promote learning in communication with teachers and active participation of the learners. It helps to foster the skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking among the learners.

Blended Learning

The term blended learning was first developed in 1960. But the terminology of blended learning was unknown until late 1990. In 1999 the term was appeared in the press release in which the interactive learning centres, an Atlanta-based education business, announced its name as EPIC learning. The term 'blended learning' initially encompasses of variety of technology and pedagogy in varying combinations. In 2006, it becomes more concrete with its First published handbook of Blended Learning by Bonk and Graham.

History

The technology-based training arises as an alternative way to an instructor-led training programme during 1960s. At that time only mainframes and mini-computers were in used. An utmost advantage of this technique is that it can be used on Larhe scale, where one instructor can teach so many people at a time. One of the examples is PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations). This system was developed by the University of Illinois and helps to control all the data. PLATO in itself had a long history of innovations and also offered a coursework from elementary level to the college level. In 1970 a Mainframe- based training had a number of limitations that gave us a way to view a satellite-based live video's. This led to the advantage for the people who had no knowledge about the usage of computer but the major challenge was the expenses that were required to make this work possible. In 1990s, CD-ROMs had arrived as a dominant form and provided the technology-based learning as bandwidth through 56k modems but they weren't also be able to support very high quality sound and videos. This was the limitation of CD-ROMs and it was difficult to track the data. Then learning management systems found a way that facilitated the data to be tracked. Here, an aviation industry used this heavily to track the course and found that how well one did on courses, how much time was spent, and where someone left off. AICC (Aviation Industry Computer-Based Training Committee), was formed in 1988 and companies like Boeing used CD-ROMs to provide training for personnel. Modern blended learning is relinquished online; however CD-ROMs could practicably still be used if a learning management system meets an institution's standards. Some examples of channels through which online blending learning can be relinquished like webcasting (synchronous and asynchronous) and online videos (live and recorded). Today, there are academics solutions such as Khan Academy where it has been practiced in classroom to serve the learners better.

Importance of blended learning

This approach helps to increase the level of achievement of the students. Teachers can pay attention to those students easily who need more individual care as many of the students in the class can learn at their own pace with new approaches. Overall, it also helps to facilitate independent learning and teacher can get feedback simultaneously. It allows the learner to create interest in the subject as well as

develop self-regulation among pupils. Above the all it becomes more authentic if it is in-cooperated in the curriculum. If so, it facilitates the teacher to maintain the anecdotal records also.

For-example- There are many case studies which illuminate the mixture of delivery system to represent the effective learning. For example IBM and the school of extended studies at Arizona State University (ASU) where IBM used to bring the face to face delivery with various technology, i.e. they use internet, emails etc while ASU used the online resources or online discussion with traditional method of learning. The data was collected by using survey method and revealed the significant improvement in the satisfaction of the students. Marked his statement that blended learning as essentially traditional in-class learning supplemented by online activities and resources. Dzibubane, blended learning should be viewed as a pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness and socialisation opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active learning possibilities of the online environment rather than a ratio of delivery modalities.

Blended learning is not only about the use of technology in the class, it about to find better ways and means for supporting and achieving the learning objectives. It gives immense support to the student’s learning as well as to the teacher also in managing and administering the class. The blended learning technique is designed to enhance the teaching and learning experiences by integrating ICT (Information and communication technology) into the traditional method of teaching. It enables the students and the teachers to engage in the ways that would not be available normally, whether it is face to face interaction or distance mode. It involves a mixing of different teaching and learning styles.

Why is blended learning important

Implementation of blended learning brings about the life fundamental shifts in teaching and learning. The goal is the integration of digital technology with conventional method of teaching. Integration of different teaching methods with conventional teaching increases the skills, both in teacher and learner and expanding the learning opportunities in the context of core. It is complex program of work but it should be implemented everywhere for a better education.

Laurillard, 2012 [10] includes the combination and types of learning activities which can be emphasised by synthesis as learning through:

1. Acquisition- it means acquire through watching, reading and listening.
2. Inquiring- it puts emphasis on inquiry based model in which it helps to arise the spirit of inquiry by using various resources to develop an evidence-based outputs.
3. Discussion- the content of the course is discussed in the class by doing various activities like debate, question-answer technique and negotiating the ideas of the students.
4. Practice- it is said that ‘practice makes a man perfect’ it can be done in the light of getting feed- back or to achieve the goal.
5. Collaboration- A position and the talent can be mixed together to get a vulnerable output.
6. Production- making something for others to evaluate against agreed criteria.

Blended learning and teachers

A professional design scientist is one who builds on the work of others, designs, tests, redesigns and shares the results that helps to build the practical knowledge of their field (Laurillard, 2012) [10]. As a professional community teachers can build a practical knowledge “how to optimise teaching with technology”.

Teachers who move to online teaching from conventional method of teaching will also aware of significant increase of his/her workload and this helps to make a setting of an optimal use of technology. This includes the several new kinds of teaching activities viz.

1. She/he has to make out planning, how students will learn in mixing of physical and digital leaning spaces.
2. Curative and adapting the content through acquisition.
3. Selecting the tools and resources for active learning.
4. Designing and developing independent learning activities for all types of learners.
5. Use teaching method that improves the conventional method.
6. Scheduling for flexibility
7. Use technology to improve efficiency of teaching and feedback quality.
8. Design the means to guide and nurture large cohorts of students.

Use of blended learning helps to rebalance the teaching activities:

Reducing	Increasing
Original designs and preparation of all learning activities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration on evidence based development • Specialised innovative design • Generalist re-designs of activities and resources.
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor-based individual guidance • Tutor- based group guidance
Summative assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-based formative assessment • Automated formative assessment
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development • Teaching evaluation with learning analytics.

Drivers that promote blended learning

Blended learning acknowledges the extraordinary power and have a flexibility in the teaching and learning in order to play proper role in 21st century. Some of the drivers are given below:

1. It is a large scale opportunity to develop instructional models with the goal of promoting the learners ability to improve their personalize learning.
2. It ensures the right resources and interventions which leads to an improvement of student’s engagement and motivation.
3. It also includes the intestinal shift to online instructional delivery in order to boost learning and productivity.

Blended learning is the transfer of “right” skills to the “right” person at the “right” time by matching the “right” terminologies with “right” learning style for the purpose of achieving the learning objectives.

Blended learning is defined as a combination or mixing of at-least four different methodologies including:

1. Mixing of technology-based learning (e-learning, collaboration, virtual classroom, etc.).
2. Combination of pedagogical approaches (behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism).
3. Mixing of forms of instructional technology (face-to-face, internet, CD –Rom, etc.).
4. Integrating instructional technology with actual job activities.

Conclusion

Blended learning acknowledges the extraordinary power and has a flexibility in the teaching and learning in order to play proper role in 21st century. Implementation of blended learning brings about the life fundamental shifts in teaching and learning. The goal is the integration of digital technology with conventional method of teaching. Integration of different teaching methods with conventional teaching increases the skills, both in teacher and learner and expanding the learning opportunities in the context of core. It is complex program of work but it should be implemented everywhere for a better education.

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