

Review

Turning Teachers' Centered to Students' Centered Teaching Techniques

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ABSTRACT

This review paper primarily focuses attention on the conversion of teachers' centered teaching techniques to self corrective and self directive students' centered ones. According to the previous and past routine the teachers are entrusted to deliver informations by playing an active role. This strategy fails to motivate the students for further study and efforts. Therefore, it is needed to turn the past practice by introducing such teaching techniques, which make the students more hard worker and responsible than the teachers. In this regard special discussion techniques and the individualistic approaches are the true answer to the question under discussion.

Key Words: Teaching techniques; Teachers; Students

INTRODUCTION

The traditional methods of teaching like lecture and demonstration have been in vogue since long at all level of education and thereby rightly considered as the time old techniques. According to these methods teacher have to play a central role, whereas the students being passive have the least involvement and participation in teaching learning process. These methods lay emphasis upon the teacher to make preparations and stuff the knowledge in the minds of the students being considered as the empty vessels (Malik, 1993). This attitude gave way to the rote memory on the part of students and lack of creativity, initiative and inculcating the spirit understanding among the students by the teachers in the past. Therefore, it was a one way track having very little impact on the better and effective teaching learning outcomes. Furthermore, these methods are blamed to lack the spirit of practical aspect for laying un-desirable emphasis upon theoretical one. This scenario of the past is now going to be changed with the students' centered teaching techniques in which the students play the pivotal role and the teachers are required to just provide the needed supervision and guidance for the rectification of the mistakes made by the students. The student's centered teaching techniques may be categories in two types:

- A. Special discussion techniques
- B. Individualized teaching techniques

A. Special discussion techniques. According to this category the students are provided with the opportunity to hold discussion on a issue or problem by themselves in the form of groups and then present the views before the moderator. The teachers' role in the discussions is just to provide the guidance, listen the arguments of participants and draw conclusions based on their suggestions presented

by the students. The teacher is not at all allowed to perform the role of a dictator but is expected to act as democratic discussion leader without enforcing his own ideas on the students (Kakkar, 2001). The following are the most important forms of special discussion techniques:

Panel discussion. According to this sub category, a limited number of participants equal in caliber and knowledge are required to present their own points of view. Their views are given due weightage in order to draw conclusions on the base of views presented by them. At this stage it should be kept in view that in panel discussion, there is no place for discussion leader but some one has to act as the moderator for assembling the views of the participants (ranging from 5 to 8) regarding the issue in discussion (Morgan *et al.*, 1978). Ultimately the moderator assembles the views of all the participants to draw conclusions aimed at the solution of the problem under discussion. Keeping in view the importance of the panel discussion it is widely accepted that the thinking abilities and thought processes of the participants can be brightened and refined by this techniques because they are given free hand to present their views, defend their views, correct their view and finally judge the validity of their views with open mindedness.

Buzz groups. The buzz group technique is quite similar to the huddle method in that it is a device used to divide larger discussion groups into smaller groups (Mani, 1994).

The most commonly used version of the technique involves dividing the original group to make up buzz groups of 12 to 15 persons (Malik, 1993).

The chairman usually introduces and clarifies the issue or problem to be discussed and motivates the group to the place that they want to discuss it. He can at this stage divide the large group into buzz groups and assign each group a specific phase or sub-problem for discussion, or he can

assign the same problem to all groups.

Huddle groups. It is difficult to get participation in discussion when large groups are involved unless the groups are for a time subdivided into smaller groups. This can be done quite easily. Therefore, the large numbers of students are subdivided into smaller groups. Each sub group comprising equal to the number of buzz group discusses the problem under discussion under the leadership of a group leader. His responsibility is not only to keep the discussion inline but also maintain discipline, allow all the participants to present their points of view, keep the record of their views and finely assemble the views for presentation to the big group leader. In this way all the students get an opportunity to give their own views without any hesitation and finally a good result is expected. This sub group is aimed at the verdict in which more than one mind are considered more fertile as compared to the single one for the solution of any problem with great success.

All the above mentioned sub groups of special discussion techniques are some-what of more theoretical nature as compared to the practical one because of the lack of involvement of any experiment in these techniques. But surely their thinking abilities are improved and refined.

B. Individualized teaching techniques. These techniques are aimed at self corrective and self directive ways in which the students themselves not only select the problems but also plan, conduct and judge the validity of the conclusions with the least interference of the teachers. The students are more active than the teachers and thus are considered contrary to the traditional teaching methods (Rauf, 2001).

The early years of the present century saw various large-plan attempts to meet the problems of individual differences. Probably no one of these projects is used at present but the value of these methods can not be challenged in respect of their validity, development of confidence among the students, initiative and sense of responsibility. Thereby these methods are also nomenclated as learning by doing.

Following are some of the most important categories of individualistic/students centered teaching methods.

The dolton plan. Initiated by Helen Parkhurst and put into operation in 1920 in the educational institutions, the Dalton Plan stressed the principles of freedom, group interaction and what Miss Parkhurst refers to as the “psychological point of view,” which, if interpreted, means that a learner is motivated in his learning by understanding that, which he is to do and by initiating his own activities towards the fulfillment of a goal.

According to this teaching method all the students are required to work on any problem/issue under least supervision of any teacher and complete the same within the stipulated period. In this method there is no discrimination between the slow and fast learners, but importance is given to the rapidity, correctness and accuracy with which any student completes the assignments. This method demands

the students working by themselves in any laboratory/library, which looks to be a very busy one and they correct their own mistakes on the self direction basis.

The winnetka plan. Credit for this plan of individualizing instruction goes to Carleton Washburne, Who in 1919 instituted an “individual technique” in the educational institutions of Winnetka, Illinois. The educational philosophy underlying the plan is that a learner should be allowed to follow his own rate of learning in each of the subject fields that comprise his full curriculum. Basic to the carrying out of the plan is the need of discovering the individual’s stage of learning for each subject and of building upon that rather than having him lock step with a group of learners, who differ from him in stage of learning readiness. This plan necessitates the administration of examinations before a specific learning unit is undertaken in order to discover what that individual already knows (Crow & Crow, 1987).

The Winnetka plan differs from the Dalton one by acknowledging the individual difference of the students in all aspects relating to learning outcomes. It means the slow learners and the rapid learner are put into different groups and the time allocated for learning is naturally different for the students having different levels of ability.

The project method. The project is a significant, practical unit of activity of a problematic nature, planned and carried to completion by the students in a natural manner and involving the use of physical materials to complete the unit in experience. This plan of meeting the learning problems of individual pupils, as suggested by Kilpatrick (Bossing, 1981).

The project method is considered more authentic, reliable and student’s needs based as compared to the former two methods. According to this method the students are required to plan, conduct, remove mistakes and judge the validity of their results without the interference of the teacher concerned. Though, it faces some definite problems like placement in time table, involvement of more time and not fitted to all the subjects but the benefits obtained in respect of motivation, initiative, cooperation, sense of responsibility, confidence and practicability are of great value. Therefore, it is rightly recommended as the model of students centered teaching method for adoption at all levels of study.

Concluding statement. In light of foregoing discussion it is concluded that we will have to turn to student’s centered teaching techniques instead of teacher’s centered ones. Because the spoon feeding by the teachers nullify the aspect of understanding among the students due to the continue use of traditional teaching methods. No doubt we can use lecture method for introducing any topic of any subject but teaching the subjects of practical nature by lecture method is not at all justified. Presently, some assignment are given to the students as the segment of students centered techniques but no one bothers to go through these assignments. It may be share wastage of time on the part of the students and

intellectual dishonesty on the part of teachers.

In the circumstance, it is strongly recommended that the topic of any subject should be taught according to their demand but not the experimental method be taught by lecture one as is being practised in almost all the educational institutions at all levels. Thereby, I have no alternate but to recommend more emphasize on the project and other students centered methods in order to develop the level of understanding among the students with regard to different subjects in the present technological era.

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