Innovative Strategies in the Classroom: An Experience

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Abstract- *Learning outcome isn't a process of result in the form of marks to declare pass or fail, but a statement which shows what the learner did the learning; what is known or what they able to do? Here, it is a matter of measurable skills, knowledge or capability that students can present at the end of the course. Therefore, it is very necessary that it should be realistic and time bound. To get such outcome, the teacher has to make special plans, which will help in getting the desired result. Keep these things in focus, in this paper, I have discussed the various learning techniques used by me in my classroom to get better learning outcome like, jigsaw learning classroom, problem-based learning and the muddiest point technique. In this experiment, 34 students studying Master of Education at Department of Education, M. K. Bhavnagar University, and Gujarat were included as a sample. In this paper, three things have been put in the centre: First, the techniques used by me in the classroom. Secondly, my observation of the use of the exercises and third one is, the opinion of the experience of students learning through these experiments. An attempt has been made to find out the result by qualitative analysis of the information.*

Keywords- Learning outcome, collaborative learning, active learning

Introduction

In the traditional classroom context, the teacher is the sender or the source, the educational material is the information or message, and the student is the receiver of the information. Mostly, the teacher controls the instructional process. The content is delivered to the entire class and the teacher is likely to put emphasis on factual knowledge. In other words, the teacher conveys the lecture content and the students receive it. Thus, the learning mode tends to be passive and the learners play little part in their learning process.

It has been found- in most universities by many teachers and students- that the conventional lecture approach in classroom is of inadequate effectiveness in both- teaching and learning. In such a lecture student play a purely passive role and they lose their concentration immediately after the lecture starts. And the entire process is limited to just a few numbers of marks. From here on, the idea of learning outcome arises in education.

Learning outcomes explain the measurable skills, abilities, and knowledge that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of a completing a course. They are student-centered

rather than teacher-centered, in that they describe what the students will do, not what the instructor will teach.

There are many researches have been conducted on this topic. Like, Rossum and Schenk (1984) conducted study on Relationship between Learning Conception, Study Strategy and Learning Outcome. Briston (2015) conducted a review of the empirical research on Learning outcome achievement in non-traditional (virtual and remote) versus traditional (hands-on) laboratories. Different techniques and new technologies also hot topics for research like, Biggs (2003) Bruff, Fisher, McEwen and Smith (2013), Ghadiri, Qayoumi, Junn, Hsu and Sujitparapitaya (2013), Gilbert and Flores-Zambada (2011), Griffiths, Mulhern, Spies and Chingos (2015), Israel (2015) and Koller, Do and Chen, Z. (2013).

These and many such researches have been done in the context of learning outcomes. After obtaining information from some of these researches, we will see the techniques used in the present research.

Strategies

Three techniques were used that are Jigsaw learning classroom, Problem based learning and the muddiest point technique. We will start from first one.

Jigsaw Learning Classroom

- At first students were divided into eight groups with four members in each group. It was kept in mind that the groups should be diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and ability as much as possible.
- One student was appointed from each group as the leader.
- Content was divided into four segments: (1) verbal meaning of qualitative research, (2) broad meaning of qualitative research, (3) characteristic of qualitative research, (4) two definitions of qualitative research,
- One segment was assigned to each student to learn.
- Time was given to the students on their segment at least twice and become familiar with it.
- Then formed a temporary “expert groups” by having one student from each jigsaw group and join other students assigned to the same segment. Time was given to the students in these expert groups to discuss the main points of their segment and to practice the presentations they had to make to their jigsaw group.
- Students were backed into their jigsaw groups.
- Encouraged others in the group to ask questions for clarification.
- Teacher moved from group to group to observe the process. Help was provided to student if they need it. Eventually, it's best for the group leader to handle this task. Leaders were trained by whispering an instruction on how to intervene, until the leader gets the hang of it.
- At the end of the session, a quiz was given on the material.

Problem Based Learning

In this technique, the students were given actual problems in education, in which they had to synthesize the problem keeping in mind the characteristics of qualitative and quantitative

research; in addition to this, the technique for data collection was to be clarified and samples were to be obtained.

The muddiest point technique

According to Angelo and Cross (1993) the "Muddiest Point" is a classroom assessment technique (CAT) in which the teacher asks students, at the end of the teaching session, to write down (on a card/online) the answer to the question "What was the muddiest point/most confusing point addressed today?" or any similar question. After completing the lecture, here, the students were asked the same question that what was the subject matter of which the sub-point were difficult to understand? After asking this question, the students were given three to four minutes time and the responses given by them were registered. Common responses were noted together. This technique was not used for teaching but used for evaluation, and especially for diagnostic work.

Now we will see the students' opinions about this technique and such type of classroom.

Opinion of the students

- The students were very active during this experiment compared to traditional classrooms. They shared their experience that this type of classroom had to be more active than the traditional classrooms. The conventional classroom was supposed to be the only listener, so after a short time of lecture, there was a distraction in his mind, as a result, some people loses their concentration on main issues or the brain diverts in some other way. This type of classroom has to be constantly functioning; as a result, each issue can be understood in depth.
- Students said that initially they were not ready to venture or venture, but learning from this kind of technique has led to the development of mentality in their initials and challenges. This also boosts self-confidence.
- Earlier, they read only for the preparation of examinations or assignments; Or it was hard work at that time, but, due to this kind of exercise, it was necessary to look at the subject very deeply. These efforts were gradually converted to habit.
- It is necessary to think deeply because of this kind of study. As a result, learning became more reflective and the study encourage for critical thinking.
- The students have the opportunity to solve real-confusing questions. They said that when they were just reading, they did not think much about some aspects, but in these exercises, not only the positive aspects of the topic, but also the small things related to them are equally important.

Observation also started parallel during my teaching work. The main points of my observation during the use of these exercises have been presented here.

Observation

Collaboration is a pillar of most active learning approaches. During the experiment it was seen that, the students who had the experience of listening to lecture and getting the exams were also seen working cooperatively with each other. Classroom environment was found live.

There were seven such students in the class who were from rural areas. They did not take part in any discussion of the general class, even if they were encouraged by me to speak, but the results were not as successful. When I saw them working in Jigsaw and other problem-solving exercises, they saw each other helping themselves and working together in the group. Students' confidence is seen to be very high. Three of these students also played the role of leader.

Summing up

An important benefit of such type of active learning classroom is regarding to the groups operating together long enough during a course. The people in teams will get to know each other and extend their activities outside of class. Students will contact each other to get help with questions or problems they are having, and they will often continue their communications in later terms. This is the useful benefit of class based on such techniques.

As students are actively involved in interacting with each other on a regular basis in an instructed mode, they are able to understand their differences and learn how to resolve social problems which may arise. It creates a stronger social support system. A natural tendency to socialize with the students on a professional level is created by such class. Students often have difficulties outside of class. Openings they can lead to a discussion of these problems by the teacher and student in a nonthreatening way and additional support from other student services units in such areas can be a beneficial by-product

Such classroom builds more positive heterogeneous relationships and encourages diversity understanding. This type of classroom promotes positive societal responses to problems and fosters a supportive Environment within which to manage conflict resolution. Research shows that such collaborative class reduces violence in any setting.

Spady, (1994) says an educational researcher who spearheaded the development of outcomes-based education, suggests that the ability *demonstrate* learning is the key point. This demonstration of learning involves a performance of some kind in order to show *significant* learning, or learning that matters. He claims that significant content is essential, but that content alone is insufficient as an outcome. Rather, knowledge of content must be manifested through a demonstration process of some kind.

We can see higher level thinking skills are developed by such classroom. Students are committed in the learning process. Students working together represent the most effective form of interaction. The effectiveness of this type of classroom can be seen in the results of different researches. Such experimental classrooms can give us quality results.

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