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NEW TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Higher education is today recognized as most important for economic and social development of the country. Higher education institutions have the greater responsibility for equipping individuals with advanced knowledge and skills required for positions of responsibility in public and private sectors such as business, and other professions (Mishra ,2006). Developing countries are left with a formidable task of expanding their higher education systems and improving quality, all within continuing budgetary constraints (Singh, 2015). The paper is an attempt to discuss about various new trends in Higher Education as Innovations in Teaching Learning Process, Best Practices in assessment and Evaluation, Various Development issue as role of funding agencies in development of Higher Education research and a road map for facing future challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

The system of higher education in India at present is facing a big challenge: the challenge to rejuvenate the total system of higher education i.e. to stimulate the academic environment for promotion of quality in teaching, learning and research in higher education institutions. Higher education is moving towards more student-centered pedagogy which promotes active, collaborative and problem based learning (Barnett, 1992).

Innovative Trend in Higher Education

Technological advancements are changing every sphere of life and individuals are becoming comparatively more active and interactive through these techniques. It is notable the use of such technology in strengthening teaching-learning process. The Classes are becoming smart and now these smart classes seems to be essential for effective and interactive teaching learning process, now teachers and students are interacting beyond the sphere of classrooms and boundaries of schools. Smart classes are like a dream of all who are directly or indirectly related to the teaching learning process.

When the class is having its own computer with multimedia and cordless mouse enabled with blue-tooth technology which can be operated from every corner of classroom and a interactive white board, it is all like a dream come true. It is appreciable when teacher is using 2-d and 3-d animated videos and content CD,s prepared on flash or using any other computer language having an option of computer based instruction or computer assisted instruction. Beside these following are some other innovative trends which are changing the dynamics of classroom

Computer Based Instructional Package

Computer Based Instructional Package is the combination of various digital media types such as text, images, audio and video, into an integrated multi-sensory interactive application or presentation to convey information to an audience. This package may includes one or all of the following; 1. Original Illustration & Graphics 2. Text on screen Animation 3. Experiment Animation 4. Motion Graphics - Editing 5. Master Output Formats Full HD Mp4

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." -- Benjamin Franklin. These packages provide an opportunity to learners in making their learning effective and retentive.

Reversal Learning Strategy and Mind Maps

This is the way in which teacher first explains the application part of the concept then tell about its theoretical background, it is also called Z to A approach. It is a kind of strategy in which teacher shows the consequence and tells reasons which are the cause of consequences. Mind map can be used by the teachers to elaborate facts and concepts in an innovative way. The visuals used to develop maps facilitate them much easier to memories. The key notion behind developing mind map is that we learn and remember more effectively by using the full range of visual and sensory tools at our disposal. Pictures, music, color, even touch and smell play a part in our learning armory will help to recollect information for long time.

Brainstorming: Facilitate out of Box Thinking

Teacher assist the learners reflection and for making them reflective there is a need to brainstorm by providing them a problem of a common interest .When multiple brains focusing on one single idea, we are sure to get different ideas on a same issue by involving all the students in reflection..Some lessons are best learnt, when discussions and activities are involved in them and brainstorming is a platform for reflections and reaction even for those who genellary not involved there self in routine class interactions

Gaming: A tool for creative teaching

Take the help of creative tools like gaming to stimulate innovative thought and useful product.. Include playful games or forms of visual exercises that will excite the young minds and capture their interest. This is a time tested method to identify young student's creative abilities and encourage creative contributions. Simulation and Academic Gaming are essentially techniques or devices to learning and teaching in more effective and efficient way. The gaming technique places students in an environment that stimulates the problem under attack and challenges them to find the most appropriate solution; it involves imagination, reasoning, argument, clash of idea and competition

Blogs: An interactive platform

Jorn Barger coined the term blog in 1999 and defined it as "A blog is a webpage where a blogger, 'logs' all the other webpage's he finds interesting. The format is normally to add the newest entry at the top of the page, so that repeat visitors can catch up by simply reading down the page. The application of blogs in teaching learning process has raised a big question that how a tool which is not designed initially for educational purpose explore its potential for higher education. As a collaborative learning tool, it lets student interact with other students or with teachers, so it offers many possibilities. Blogs generally classified in instructor blog and students blogs in accordance with the role of teacher and students

- Instructor blog: blogs written by Teacher/instructors are commonly used as an supplementary mode of communication to share information with students. Instructor blogs usually contain course content, course management information, general commentary to all students about their progress, etc.
- Student blog: blogs written by students are basically learning blogs or project blogs. A learning blog is "a learning diary, created concurrently with the learning experience, and reporting on the learning content as wells as the process.

Problem-Posing: Data Based Problem Solving

Problem posing is also like the problem-solving method that focuses on the derivation of questions and answers based on some given data. It checks the presence of mind of learner and its ability to visualize the learned concepts.

- If you know that 11 + 37 = 48, how much is 13 + 25 ? How did you find the answer?
- Change any one digit in 4315. Did the number increase or decrease? By how much?

Collaborative learning: Learning in a Group

Collaborative learning is a shift from traditional lecture centered classroom in to a active, interactive and collaborative classroom, where learners discussion and collaborations are lives with traditional lecturing, listening and questioning. Teachers who use collaborative learning in their classroom are more an intellectual simulator, less an expert transmitter of information's. Learning collaboratively claim responsibility, endurance and responsiveness, in which all are accepted to participate and grow. Collaborative learning activities can be varied from small classroom discussions along with less time lectures, to the longitudinal research study of years. The purpose of collaborative learning also varies as small group work around specific sequential steps, or structured tasks. In collaborative learning environment the teachers initiate to motivate learners by engaging them into activities. Explosion of technology also simulate the collaboration beyond a synchronous group in to collaborative group of distant learners, this is termed as computer supported collaboratively learning. Sharing information on email, making Google groups , content related chatting on face book and whatsapp groups and more recently learning through Moodles , Mooc's and Interactive web, sharing on slide share and youtube are the main sources for computer supported collaboration. Computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) is a pedagogical approach wherein learning takes place via social interaction using a computer or through the Internet. This kind of learning is characterized by the sharing and construction of knowledge among participants using technology as their primary means of communication or as a common resource CSCL can be implemented in online and classroom learning environments and can take place synchronously or asynchronously.

Constructivist learning environment: learner is the key

Constructivist approach is based on the assumption that knowledge is subjective, contextual and inherently partial.
It is necessary to see that what the child already knows how it is linked with the present knowledge and thereby how he learns a particular concept. The teacher is supposed to act as a facilitator or a coach who guides the student's critical thinking, analysis and synthesis abilities throughout the learning process

and also as a co-learner in the process. The importance lays in the fact that mere teaching or reading and rote memorization do not lead to meaningful learning. Learners construct knowledge in the social and cultural environment in which they are embedded. Constructivist learning involves student's active participation in problem solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity. Students construct their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches related to their prior knowledge and experiences, applying them to new situation and integrating new knowledge gained with pre-existing intellectual constructs. Learner has receptive role not a passive listener. Social constructivism scholars view learning as an active process where learners should learn to discover principle, concept, and facts for themselves and also encourages intuitive thinking in learners.

Role Playing

Active and attentive without preparation is the spirit of this strategy. By using this technique, we can assign distant roles to learners and they can act them as if the characters. We can motivate and take participation of maximum learners. By using this method we can focus on the burning issues of the society e.g. Juvenile delinquency, Students suicide, childlabour etc. this can be used as a prime method for teaching social sciences.

Responsive Teaching

When a teacher meets the requirement of all the learners as per their interest and cognitive level, it is called responsive teaching. It increases learners participation by a responsive act of teachers, as learners has an urge to know and understand environment, natural phenomena and events taking place in interactive social situations. Responsive teaching make students more confident to take responsibility for learning learn and think independently and make them creative. In responsive teaching learner have freedom to put his idea in classroom give , however that idea may be incomplete or incorrect but by doing so it reinforce independent thinking and It motivates children to work further and achieve more and more.

Case-Based Instruction

Case based Instruction includes the applications of stories or teaching "cases" to promote contextual knowledge and understanding. Cases are best used to instruct individuals about realistic decision-making situations. For example, cases help train pre-service teachers, instructional designers, and others, how to respond to actual problems they will encounter in their life. Case-based learning is promoted in many universities because it facilitates teachers to impart important concepts and facts within the context of authentic or real-world situations (Kalra,2011). Context is thought to be more motivational to learners and it provides a concrete framework from which complex concepts can be more easily understood. Further, case-based learning reduces the potential for "inert" knowledge.

Conclusion

The Era of Globalization has brought out changes at all levels level of education. In most of the institutions of higher learning it is obvious to find large lecture rooms, centre-staged with discipline experts, continue to transmit theoretical knowledge in big-sized chunks for passive learners to receive and consume. The approach taken by many teachers in universities today is simply a result of the way they were taught. Typically university education has been a place to learn theoretical knowledge devoid of context. The teachers transmit the facts and skills that they are required to absorb and regurgitate on exams. Text books and lecture notes are the main resources for study, with the practice of retention and transfer of knowledge was assumed but rarely assessed. From the above discussion it is clear that system of education in general and higher education in particular can be more efficient and effective, if we applied and integrate innovative techniques and new trends in our teaching learning process.

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