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Need for an hour - Blended Learning

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ABSTRACT

Each learner has his own way of learning style and requirements keep on changing. In the pre-digital era, traditional learning environment prevailed. But in the 21st century, learning environments are completely blended with the "e-elements". Blended learning is the process of learning that provides the platform for higher level of innovative and interactive sessions. The modes of delivery make use of models such that it helps the learner to know the concept in realistic manner. The mix and match of various learning environments are utilized. This paper focuses on various methodologies that make the blended learning effective and more concentration is given on project-based learning and research-based learning.

KEYWORDS: blended, learning, project, research, innovation, interactive.

INTRODUCTION:

The objective of the education is to enhance the thinking ability and to bring out the implementation skill of the learners. The need for this hour is to transform the traditional class room mode to the modern modes of learning of the electronic era. The scope of traditional method of classroom delivery is limited and significant methods needs to be incorporated to make learner more expose to practical applications. The high standard of education is needed to improve the living style of Indian population and it incurs more cost. Role of IT in the current educational field is vital by using computer, mobile or smart phones and other budding electronic media. Blended learning is the buzzword in the western countries and it showed the excellent reach in all the way. The various surveys and research is carried out in this field to make the learning environment more lively, interactive and innovative.

Learning will become interesting when the Psychology of the either parties of learner and facilitator are having equal involvement on the content they are seeking knowledge. Learners should be motivated with the help of practical issues rather than only theoretical issues. Learners will enjoy and interact when teachers makes the environment more interesting. Knowledge sharing should be the inclination of the deliverer and seeking should be on the learner's side. Higher education needs lots and lots of innovative thinking so the instructor should have an intriguing personality. Personality of the deliverer greatly influences the session they are handling. Instructor should be thorough in the concepts they are sharing with the real time scenario expertise in concerned topics which largely attracts the other learners. Various levels of learners need to be taken into consideration by the instructor and use specific innovative approach to enhance the knowledge flow.

The trend of blended learning also found the entry in to our education field. Various Innovative techniques that can be adopted for the effective learning environment are Problem- based learning, Role plays, Smart Classrooms, Simulations, Debates, Warm up sessions, Groups Discussions, Industrial visits, Digital library, Quiz, remote learning sessions via video conferencing, Project based learning and Research based learning.

Problem-based learning is a process of finding a problem, analyzing it and solving that mentally. The ultimate aim of this method is to overcome difficulties and to propose a solution for the situation. It varies from person to person and from situation to situation. **Role plays** helps to think out-of-box by opening the minds of learners. The team spirit and exchange of knowledge are enhanced among the learning community. It brings the learners out from their constraints, fear of expression and interaction between the learners.

Smart classrooms are popularly called as digital classes and trend of it is visualized in all the educational places. The visual education system is gaining higher level of attraction. The learners' are getting very good knowledge about the concepts.

Simulations are appealing both intrinsically and extrinsically. They help to know the real world in the virtual environment in less cost in short time. Students play active role and evokes enthusiasm and positive influence. Complex concepts that are harder to reach the learner can be easily demonstrated and it paves greater chance for them to comprehend it. The impact of understanding is greatly experienced in the digital field.

Debates help to develop the awareness of decision making. It promotes personality development, concentration and maintains the emotional balance. It removes the timidity of the students and helps to bring out their viewpoints boldly in the society. It is win or lose but experience gathered served them in the future.

Warm up sessions are useful to setup the best atmosphere for learning. Well planning is required to manage the session else results in the disinterested learners. Fun warm up sessions will raise the energy levels of the participants and produce highly flexible place for knowledge sharing.

Group discussion sessions provide wonderful time for the learners' unity, togetherness, individuality, initiation, presentation skills. To think in diverging way and improve the process of thinking. The intention is not to procure victory rather understand well in polite and friendly manner.

Industrial visits impart knowledge since visualizing is more effective than hearing and will not be easily forgettable. Real time experience is essential and this provide best platform. Alert the students about the careers available.

Digital library serves a vast source on information with less effort and able to retrieve any information in just a click. Digital libraries are enthusiastic to adopt innovations in technology providing users with improvements in electronic and audio book technology. Provision for multiple access i.e. same resource can be concurrently used by lot. Accessible at no cost for instructors and students at all times.

Quiz is the best way to individualize instruction for those students who need special attention. In this traditional method mixing the aptitude based queries makes it still more interesting. Subjective type questions along with the latest technical update questionnaires and current trends make it more challenging and create awareness among the learners. Helps to keep them in touch with the real world.

Remote session via video conferencing is gaining popularity among the learners and particularly helps for cross country knowledge sharing. The leading universities tie ups highly depend on this technology. Since ideas can be discussed and brainstormed via this platform.

Project – based learning is the hot cake in the educational field. The environment is so tough on the either side since thorough factual

knowledge is highly required to express the complex things in the realistic way. The courses are multifaceted and so the burden on understanding is so immense. The proper guidance is the needed to tackle this scenario. The problem is tied up in the course through the word called "project". The learner is in the crucial position to imbibe the concepts and refer the current journals and bring out the issues to complete the level. The tutor should be the backbone in each step for building the project and the confidence level of the learner. The continuous reading of the related concept, followed by the summarization then designing that ends in the model. Based on the course this slightly changes. But ultimate destination is to develop the model for real world and that in turn serves the nations growth. The understanding is strengthened when it is going to become collaborative and vital. The meet in the middle is the place that makes various other fields in intact to create better model. The specialization of various fields and proper coordination of them is the area to be given top priority. Based on this concept the special laboratories are being started in leading universities and that brings various projects based on social and economic criteria. The ample opportunities are provided for the students and teams are formed. They work together to give good results.

Research – based learning is the milestone in the field of higher education and need for that is important. If education is not based on it then learning possesses higher risk of becoming too theoretical and just reading. Based on this strong research group is wanted. The researchers need to be motivated with the help of the inspiration talks from the eminent personalities of the various areas. Higher importance should be given for the researchers to work in the other countries also. Healthy research ideas can be achieved only by the way of discussions with commitment. The conferences, seminars, guest lectures, carnivals, workshops provides the greatest platform for disseminating the research ideas. The journals plays the vital role in the research to know about the various thins happening in the overall world. The impact factor acts as the mirror for the research work. The researchers' forum helps to know about the work carried out in the other area of the universe.

CONCLUSION

Blended learning is transformational. Faculties blend their courses to put together a more flexible, efficient and accessible and varied learning experience for their students' community. The responsible to make the educational environment healthy is in the hands of the facilitators. The future generation is in the digitals hands and correct way needs to be directed by the higher hands to make the best academicians, industrialist and scientist.