Techniques of Teaching in Higher Secondary Education in Assam: An Overview

Nawshad Ali Ahmed

Assistant Professor, Sontali Anchalik College, P.O. Mahtoli, Dist. Kamrup, Assam, India

Abstract

"Schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities."

- Salamanca Declaration

The international move towards inclusion of special needs children into mainstream classrooms rather than educating them in an isolated environment has been a main concern raising, issues and interest for educators, policymakers and researchers in recent times. But every society has to decide in a unique way as how to deal with the Children with Special Needs (CWSN). This topic is an attempt to shed some light on the topic of inclusive education. It offers hope to those schools ready to implement inclusive education. The topic also would encourage the school authorities and the educational bodies to take initiatives in establishing inclusive education schools and create awareness to join the drive for "education for all".

Keywords: Teaching Techniques, Higher Secondary Education, Children with Special Needs, Assam

"To enrich the quality of life, Education must generate curiosity, competence and compassion."
- Dr. Albert V. Baez

Teaching involves a systematic approach to creating an educational process that will lead to knowledge transfer. An effective teaching includes the content elements and the strategy for presenting that content. Today's instructional technologies, coupled with cognitive research findings are transforming teaching and learning. One of the most powerful movements in education today is towards 'learner centered' or 'active learning'. Active learning requires a shift from simply 'delivering instruction' to setting the conditions for the process of engagement, application, syntheses and authentic understanding.

A number of different teaching techniques have emerged due to this change in the system of education:

1. Flipped Classroom
It is a technique in which the teacher inverts the method of teaching. This model involves encouraging students to prepare for the lesson beforehand. Thus, the class becomes a dynamic environment in which students elaborate on what they have already studied. Students prepare a topic at home so that the class next day can be devoted to answering any question they may have on the topic. This allows the students to go beyond their normal boundaries and explore their natural curiosity.

2. Design Thinking

This technique is based on resolving real-life cases through group analysis, brainstorming and creating ideas. 'Design Thinking' prepares students for the real world and arouses their curiosity, analytical skills and creativity. The technique is often used in popular MBA or Masters classes to analyze real cases experienced in companies in the past. Online toolkits are available which provide educators to explore Design Thinking in any classroom.

3. Self-learning

Curiosity is the main driver of learning. A basic principle of learning is that students should never be made to memorize large reams of text that they will sooner or later forget. The key to successful learning is to let students explore an area which interests them and learn about it for themselves. A common technique for exploring self-learning is the use of 'Mind Maps'. Teachers can create a central node on a Mind Map and allow students the freedom to expand and develop ideas.

4. Gamification

Learning through the use of games is a technique that has already been explored by many teachers, specially in the elementary and pre-school education. By using game, students learn without even realizing. Therefore, learning through play or 'Gamification' is a learning technique that can be very effective at any age. It is a very useful technique to keep students motivated. However, the teacher should design projects that are appropriate for their students, taking into account their age and knowledge level. One idea may be to encourage students to create quizzes on a certain topic.

5. Social Media

Social media may be utilized in the classroom to arouse interest in a particular topic and to motivate them. Students today are always connected to the social network through and so will need little motivation to get them engaged with social media in the classroom. The ways the teacher can use this technique of teaching are quite varied as there are hundreds of social networks and possibilities. E.g., the Brazilian Academy of Languages 'Red Balloon' encourages students to review the tweets of their favourite artists and correct grammatical errors that they committed. In this effort the students get to improve their own English Language skills.

6. Free Online Learning Tools

There are an array of free online learning tools available which teachers can use to encourage engagement, participation and a sense of fun into the classroom. Teachers can create an interactive and dynamic classroom environment using online quizzes to test student's knowledge. E.g., Exam Time's free online learning tools give teachers ideas to create flashcards, maps, models, quizzes, notes etc. Teachers can share study materials and resources directly with each student online.

7. Brainstorming

This is a superior technique that can be used for generating ideas. It is used for generating any possible solution to a problem. Brainstorming encourages students to come up with creative, exciting, and radical, ideas. The students need not have any fear of criticism and therefore, may generate spontaneous reactions to an issue and find solutions to specific problems. However, although; very effective, brainstorming is only a part of the problem solving process.

8. Case Study

This is an inquiry into individual people, place or event. The focus is usually on a single occurrence, rather than extended events. Students are required to study such limited occurrences and it is hoped that they will draw conclusions which can be applied to similar but more general events. Students, begin to substantiate generalizations, with relevant examples. The case study reflects detailed information about limited subjects. They may come in the form of stories, vignettes, journalistic narratives, research data, documents, textbooks and interpretive essays.

9. Dramatization

This is an execution technique particularly well suited to acting out of a particular story, event or theme. While doing so, the students, go in depth to learn all about the event or individual. The focus is, however, on telling a short story, with the product or service as the star performer. Dramatization technique involves more excitement and suspense in telling the story. The purpose of using drama is to draw the viewer into the action it portrays. If the drama is successfully played, the audience tend to become lost in the story and experiences the concerns and feelings of the characters. Dramatization is a very common technique or method in the teaching of history.

Various techniques may be applied in the classroom to make teaching 'learner-centered' and 'activity-based'. Active learning can occur in any delivery format: in the classroom, blended, or online. The common denominator is that the students should interact with their peers and discuss real problems and issues in constructing knowledge and understanding.

As the Chinese proverb goes: "Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand".

Conclusion

The above study revealed that majority of teachers had good level of adjustment. Male and female teachers did not differ in adjustment. As well as, no significant differences existed between urban and rural, trained and untrained secondary school teachers of Kamrup district. Marital status has no influence on their adjustment. No significant difference was found between experienced and inexperienced secondary school teachers of Kamrup district.

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