



IMPROVING STUDENT'S LEARNING ABILITY THROUGH SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Today's students have amazing ability of learning and understanding. If this is focused and researched then it can give amazing results in improvement in learning abilities. But the real challenge is to find out the best method that can help to discover and nurture the learning abilities of students for the overall development of humanity. The middle schooling plays a very crucial role in learning ability of students in his / her life. The viewpoint and the future of the students can be change by child centred education at school level. Thus, it is very important to re-create school education system to develop the abilities of students to level up of proximal development with effective methods of teaching. This paper focuses on the better outputs of social constructivist approach in teaching learning process and discovering of the hidden abilities or potential of students that is unexplored by student himself.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is not only the method of achieving skills and knowledge, but it also makes the individual able to live in a determined way and to contribute in true social development. Education is a process and human beings are its product. Thus, learning methods should be well constructed in such a way that every individual can practice to be a master of his own learning. It is a responsibility of the school is to encourage their students to learn, discover new information, think and analyze deeply and take initiative to meet the need of rapidly growing world (Krishan, Phalachandra,2010)

The high school years are considered the formative phase of life. Students creates skills, knowledge and attitude through different methods of learning experiences and offers opportunities in school. These educational experiences of schools create the character, build up the personality and attitude of the students. (Shashtry, 2008)

In our country, completely different subjects are educated at different stage of educational process and every subject has its different ability to alter the students to achieving their goals. However, all the subjects are frequently taught by the typical method of mug and jug. During this jug and mug theory of learning, the teacher is the full jug and teacher's job is to pour knowledge from the full jug to the empty mug. This sort of teaching-learning process limits students' freedom of imagination and limits their ability to create and develop new

information. Sood (2008) identified three difficulties in modern scientific education described in NCF-2005 in his article-Learning Science as a Constructivist / Conceptual Change Process. First, scientific education does not achieve the objective of fairness and inclusivity; second, science education develops competency but does not foster originality and creativity; and third, traditional examination systems dominate science education. There is a need for a scientific curriculum that is accessible in respect of both content and methodology, permitting all students to participate in ways that are appropriate for them.

The National Curriculum Framework-2005, developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, recommends for a paradigm shift away from rote learning and more towards learning by understanding. Its goal is to develop pupils as creative thinkers involved in resolving issues in daily life through correct observation and judgment. Our schools' current curriculum is teacher-centered and authoritative. As a result, in order to attain learning objective in the intellectual, emotional, and psychomotor domains with in best possible manner, schools should adopt teaching learning techniques that inspire and motivate students to become more innovative and productive.

As a result, greater attention should be focused on those approaches to teaching learning that appropriately combine technological and other relevant aspects; address the limitations of traditional forms of learning, that include a lack of motivation, life satisfaction, and to reduce the degree of failure of e-learning, which includes a lack of communication with teachers and classmates, and difficulty in facing us.

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Several philosophers and psychologists interpreted knowledge creation in the current teaching process in different manners. According to Jean Piaget, knowledge acquisition refers to the process of continuous self construction. He proposes that children are active thinkers who are always attempting to build a more realistic and comprehensive knowledge of the world around them. Piaget's theory of cognitive development emphasizes three key processes, mainly assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration, which constitute the basis for learning. Assimilation is the process of recognizing and developing concepts. As long as new knowledge does not challenge the current structure, it can be absorbed. When new or unexpected information emerges, concepts are modified and reconstructed - this is known as accommodation. When there are no conflicting elements in a concept, it is said to be in equilibration. Individuals are naturally pulled to this mindset. Vygotsky believed that information acquisition cannot be separated from social and cultural contexts, and that individuals acquire it through sharing, comparing, and debating. Learners develop their own understanding while also supporting others in discovering meaning. According to Vygotsky, every action in a child's cultural development happens in two ways: once on the social level and then again on the individual level; first between individuals and then within the kid. Knowledge is therefore developed and produced in this way. According to him, learning includes much more just assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge by students.

According to Vygotsky, there are 2 type of development: actual development and potential development. The level of actual development has already been acquired by the student, and it is the level where the student is capable of discussing issues individually. The level of potential development (the zone of proximal development) is the level of development that a student is able to achieve with the help of teachers or in collaboration with other professionals. The level of potential development is the point where the learning occurs. It consists of cognitive system that are now continuously developing, but can only develop under the mentorship of or in co - operation with more knowledgeable others (MKO) who already have a higher specificity skill levels than the student, such as a teacher, trainer, senior citizen, classmates, computer systems, or any other digital source of information with respect to the specific activity, process, or concept.

Vygotsky also proposes the concept of various viewpoints and claims that all learners' methods of thinking differ from one another. Students approach the topic from various viewpoints, then provide them chance to discuss the different points of view and motivate in groups where they may express their ideas on the topic with one another and make a decision. Scaffolding and inter-subjectivity are also important aspects of the knowledge construction process.

Social Constructivist Approach

Social constructivist approach is an approach in which knowledge is cooperatively created among relationship between students and teachers. Social constructivism highlight the significance of teamwork. The teacher facilitates and develops collaborative learning, which really is a type of student interactions. It involves cooperative learning and critical analysis of the activity given by the teacher. Students in collaborative learning collaborate toward a common

objective and are liable for the learning of others as well as their own. As a result, it is a group effort rather than an individual event. This participation in activities and conversations enables learners with various abilities and backgrounds to reach a common understanding of the truth (Duffy and Jonassen).

Strategies used in Social Constructivist Approach

Khan (2014), in his research on Constructivism: A Constructivist Teaching Method in Science Teaching, highlighted that constructivist education does not refer to a single teaching technique. However, it includes a number of characteristics that should be covered continuously in a school environment. Social constructivism is not a single stated theory, but rather a collection of linked research reflecting various interpretations of the general approach. (Detel, 2001) To put it another way, the Social Constructivist Approach can be believed of it as a catch-all term for innovative teaching strategies that adhere to social constructivist principles, like concept mapping, reciprocal questioning, games and simulation, jigsaw classroom activities, situated learning, structured controversies, activity based learning, project based learning, inquiry based learning, & Different objectives in science, such as knowledge, understanding, execution, and overall performance, were successfully achieved by both boys and girls through multimedia teaching (Satyaprakasha and Sudhanshu, 2014)

The Teacher's Role in the Social Constructivism Approach

In a social constructivist learning environment, the teacher's duty is multifaceted. Instead of being the sole distributor, the teacher acts as a guide, presenter, motivator, stimulate, and good teacher. The teacher's role in the social constructivist classroom is to assist students in building their knowledge and to control students' presence in the classroom during the process of learning.

Furthermore, as per the Association for Constructivist Teaching (ACT), a social constructivist teacher highlights learner reflection and cognitive struggle and encourages peer engagement. According to Kompf (1996, p. 173) "Constructivist teachers permit student reactions to drive courses, modify teaching techniques, and modify content." . The rationale behind the teacher's restricted involvement is that it motivates learners to respond in collaborative learning.

Social Constructivist Approach in the Classroom

The 7E Learning Cycle may be used to build a classroom under the Social Constructivist Approach. Eisenkraft (2003) identified seven important components of the strategy as generate, engage, research, illustrate, elaborate, assess, and expand. The NSTA (National Science Teacher Association) recommends this instructional design paradigm . In terms of student success, the 7E teaching approach outperformed the standard instructional paradigm (Shaheen and Kayani, 2015).

The 7E learning cycle is just a practical model that is advised for instructional approaches in scientific curriculum, and educators or teachers should be expected to pursue this approach into classroom teaching in current science curriculum situation (Balta&Sarac, 2016).

The learners is in an entirely different atmosphere in a social constructivist learning environment. The emphasis shifts away

from the classroom and onto the learners. To give this methodology a practical shape, the teacher, rather than the only transmitter, follows the 7E learning cycle. The teacher distributes the students into small groups of 4-5 students each and personally communicates with each student within every group to enhance and strengthen the learning process. The students are being challenged to play an active interest in their own learning experience.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to studies, the social constructivist approach has been far more successful than traditional ways of teaching and learning.

Sharma and Sankhian (2018) provide focus on the 7E learning cycle model and evaluate relevant research findings. According to research, this approach can make students' problem-solving abilities, achievement level, and scientific process potentials.

Khan (2015) revealed that constructive ways of science education have been much more successful than traditional approaches in his research on constructivism towards a paradigm shift in classroom teaching and learning. He also discovered that the use of digital animations, digital labs, software applications, and sensors greatly boosted test performance.

Bay, Bageci, and Cetin (2012) researched if there was a significant difference in the learners' problem solving skills and meta-cognitive levels whenever the authentic task-based social constructivist approach is used and found that the task-based social constructivist approach has a positive impact on the problem solving skills and meta-cognitive levels of educators.

Panda (2012) considered collaborative learning as one of the constructivist approach's educational models in his paper "Collaboration Learning-An Approach in Constructivism."

Akyol and Fer (2010) investigated the impact of a social constructivist learning environment (SCLE) on a primary school student in fifth grade. Analyses revealed that learners gained new information through group work and multimedia, leading to the conclusion that SCLE design had a good influence on learning outcomes.

The Advantages of a Social Constructivist Approach

The Social Constructivist method is a multidimensional methodology that aims to maximise an individual's learning ability through the inclusion of cooperative activities in the classroom. As a result of these efforts, the students' learning increases in reference to educational objectives: cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor areas become more stable and are integrated by the students in a less stressful way. This technique is more helpful for the both teachers and students as collaborative debate and exchange of views allows both participants to get different points of view on the subject matter and gain a more deeper understanding. Students' learning ability is increased as a result of this collaborative partnership, and they integrate more knowledge in a simple and straightforward manner. They become inspired as a result of mastery gained through the use of the social constructivist method.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the social constructivist method is the most cooperative and satisfying technique to expanding the scope of students' learning potential. This method is especially useful for students' diverse levels of ability and self-efficacy. They tend to provide the most benefit in terms of student learning by just being exposed to praise and encouragement and observational learning in groups. This method is very effective in transforming information into understanding because it allows learners to improve their learning ability in relation to the chosen matter being presented in school using a social constructivist approach. Given the immense advantages of the social constructivist approach to enhancing students' learning ability, decision makers should aim to make this approach the central pillar of education policy and make an effort to design the curriculum in such a way that students have sufficient opportunities to acquire learning benefits through discovering and constructing ideas in the social context is presented to them using a social constructivist method.

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