

Student Engagement Practices in Higher Education during Pandemic by the Faculties of Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu.

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Abstract

Purpose: Teaching doesn't but involvement makes students learn. When an adult remembers his or her school teacher, it means they not only taught them but also how they made them to feel about the same. Very few teachers have the potential to involve, engage and make the children concentrate in the class. Chalk and talk education fuel a one-way learning which is not exactly learning for the kids that too in a higher education setting, without the involvement of the students there is no place for learning. This paper aims to examine the Student Engagement practices in Higher Education Setting during Pandemic by the Faculties to explore the feasible student engagement practices during the recent pandemic.

Findings: Many teachers were already practising student engagement practices in the teaching learning process. Engaging students through creative activities and making the classes live has become an inevitable factor in every day's higher education setting. An interactive environment in classroom paves way for the introverted students to open up at some point. To break the barrier between the students and teachers and make them to indulge in learning activities "Student's engagement practices" is a lifesaving technique.

Originality/value/implications: Only when a student is engaged and involved, he subconsciously starts learning the subject. Not every day a lively class is possible, only very few teachers can sustain in that tact consistently.

Keywords: Student Engagement, Pandemic, Creative, Higher Education, Teachers, Classroom.

Introduction

On March 11th, 2020, COVID-19 was declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization. Just like other industries tertiary education also has evolved from the long-established traditional methods which functioned during the pre-pandemic world, which means repositioning most, if not all classes that were offered face to face in physically present

classroom to an online environment. Neither relaxations can't be made nor break could be given. The modification was not a step-by-step progression but an essential and swift instantaneous decision that was made overnight to help minimize acerbity of the prevalent pandemic. Consequently, classes that have not ever offered online were given a changeover to be instructed online and the classroom culture has altered to a culture of high distraction. From combined researches that's scrutinized from both technology and communicative responses this paper focuses to review research on the tactics that have been found to foster student engagement through the e-learning i.e., online classes.

Collaborative Technologies for Sense-Making

As we all know Covid 19 mandated and decreed digital collaborations that are ample in student and faculty engagement across different groups of students. Use of,

- Collaborative documents
- Discussion boards
- Slides
- Notes
- Whiteboards, and other file types not only provide a way for collaborative notetaking but also offer students and instructors a view of the process and of the output of all groups participating in an instructional activity.

Digital collaborative technologies embrace four important student engagement objectives:

Connecting students,

- With the content.
- With the instructor.
- With one another.
- Within and across groups.

Holding on to these "Combined learning" practices and supplemented affordances post-pandemic is worth the effort as we move to the new normal.

Student Experts for Learning and Technology Support

In the course of the pandemic, staff were thinly stretched to meet the growing and over extended learning and technology needs of the students. The new technologies can also help students visualize difficult-to-understand concepts. Students can work with visualization and modelling software that is similar to the tools used in non-school environments, increasing their

understanding and the likelihood of transfer from school to non-school settings. Contemporary and advanced technologies can be implemented.

- Introducing exciting curricula on establishing problems of actuality into the lecture room.
- Imparting platforms and devices to amply magnify the art of learning.
- Indulging learners and staffs with fresh and additional fortuity probabilities for student response and contemplation, on learning sessions, and revisionism process
- Drawing together the within reach and intercontinental communities that include teachers' premier persons, observing learners, their genitors, performing savants and disparate people who are interested in broadening horizons for teaching and learning

Back Channels for Informal Communication

Amidst the pandemic Zoom's chat feature, Google classroom, along with other tools, provided back-channel opportunities for the virtual classroom setting if the students and teachers. Uses of these mediums include,

- Immediately capturing student responses.
- Coaching.
- Question-asking.
- Evaluation purposes.

It is found that during the online sessions' students are as unlikely to unmute and share ideas or answer questions in a large remote synchronous course. But these are the same students who in the live classroom raise their hand during the lecture. Online students are however inclined to use digital chat like communication modes with which they are used-to in thier informal communication ways, use such methods to connect in the virtual classroom environment. Chat permits instructors to communicate and connect less formally with the students with easy approachability "Can you follow the topic, or do we have to go through a review? If we can move on, type 'yes' in chat. If my explanation is not adequate, type 'no.'"

Chat interactions also encourages participation in a way that is more likely informal and calling forth the volunteers.

If conducted properly, they allow teachers and students to learn together smoothly and efficiently to share opinions, exchange information and attain knowledge, when handled consciously for a rightful purpose, with inclusive and reverential communication guidelines, back channels that are available to the instructor and students offer communication and conveying mode for students to interact with ideas, the instructor, and one another. It is believed

that back channels are valuable instructional tools, for learning during a pandemic or for further learning in our new normal.

Supplemental Recording for Expanded Learning Space

Our rearmost teaching innovation presents engagement outside of classrooms. Instructors became conscious of the necessity to record live remote sessions immediately after witnessing the prevailing condition of the pandemic 2020. When dispersed students encountered technical and time zone glitches to synchronous class attendance, the supplemental recording goes far beyond traditional classroom flipping. Supplemental recording records the session, whether flipped or not, for students those who are unable to attend the class in person, and also expands and enhanced learning spaces, with additional benefits for the students who need to repeat engaging with the course content and instructors who want to review content one another time. This was initially motivated and encouraged by an aspiration to use supplemental recording to involve and embrace students who missed their class for prior and excused absences for reasons like

- Personal and family emergencies
- Job interviews
- Group activities etc.

Continuing engagement with these students seemed sufficient justification to incorporate the usage of supplemental recording. When questioned and discussed whether the other students might decide on not attending the classes if recordings were being provided. The collective answer is that class attendance is not directly related to providing the recording, for the following rightful reasons

1. First, students who are unable to attend classes must not be excluded from content that can easily be recorded and distributed. Instructors simply can click record and the recordings will be automatically captured, rendered, and linked to the course which is as simple as that
2. Second, students will participate in class based on their course expectations and practices. Students with frequent "unexcused" absences were even less likely to make use of the recordings.

New Traditions

The COVID-19 pandemic has innovated many opportunities and chances for a constructive change in the traditional teaching methods. These adaptations and modifications can inculcate engagement in and out of class while enabling learners with expanding

flexibilities and contributing instructors with greater ability to reach their students. These changes help faculty from simply getting away with measuring attendance, which is a poor proxy for student engagement practices. Teaching amidst pandemic has provided wide exposure to a host of tools supporting and tracking students' participation and observing their understanding.

To everyone's astonishment and benefit, the teaching for higher education has become even more collaborative. Faculty members and support staff like

- Learning designers
- Instructional developers
- Educational technology consultants and
- Librarians

are given additional opportunities to share and discuss what needs improvement or modification. Institutions have increased the frequency and availability of workshops, seminars, and one-on-one meetings to address any needs. These productive and positive resources in higher education instruction will greatly profit on continuing these shared opportunities.

The Power of Peer Interaction

One of the most important and effective ways students learn in online courses is through the peer-to-peer interaction. In traditional classrooms there were undeniably far more lectures and much student involvement that can't be denied, the teachers spoke to the students and taught the content and courses. In online courses, there is more of a group discussion. Learners inherit the teacher's outlook as well as standpoint from their fellow students during the course. From the students precepted school of thought, this puts together for an even better engrossing and an equally reciprocated vocal classroom. In a live classroom the teacher may present their perceptions and thoughts regarding a specific subject and an e-learning mediated training also makes this possible. The only difference is the dosage of interactive performance from the students. They add on brand new and up to date dimensions that the customary courses have long-forgotten to provide with. The finest segment of peer interaction is that learners can acquire the subject knowledge from each and everyone's individual perceptions. Notable number of online learners have had years of expertise mind and skills This supplies abundance of understanding and knowledge that may add to the professor's point of view and acceptance. Subsequently the happenings occurrence grants everyone, inclusive of the teacher or professor to garner salient discernments.

Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world and higher education forever as not only students from high school but also the upcoming high-schoolers skipped the steps of foundation. In general, everyone's optimistic expectation is to get back to the physically happening and interactive classroom soon. However, taken into account the prevailing pandemic condition, coming up with a stable tactics for engaging the learner will help and involve them to be more occupied with their academic work which eventually leads them to produce an elevated learning as the end results. Online educating platform is progressing for the betterment every day and we must aim high in continuing the development in more effective ways for generating updated classroom customs in online sessions that is as good as achieving in the face-to-face classrooms. By suggesting and proposing advanced endeavours to make use of online classroom technologies and communications masterly using the e-learning scaffolds, teachers can impart effective virtual learning encounters to the learners that will be as good as the conventional learning experiences.

Ample chances are bestowed to incorporate participants i.e., the learners who are at farness to have included in the occurrence to who are

- Reluctant to put forward their thoughts blatantly.
- Learners whose mother tongue is not the global language (English).
- Learner who are differently abled.
- Learners who are slightly involved in the "traditional" classrooms.

Introducing and putting into use these new found inceptions and arrangements, we are more than ready to be highly encompassing of the entire learner community in the new standard of tertiary education

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