



## **TEACHERS ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT AND CURRICULAR CHALLENGES IN STUDENT CENTRIC LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper focuses on the challenges that modern teachers face, along with suggestions on how you can conquer them to make a bigger impact on your students. The role of the educator has always been extremely challenging, but it has become even more so now because newer factors have entered into the mix. A widespread use of technology, an overexposure to varied forms of content, and shortened attention spans, are among a few of them. There are also many ways of learning available to students now. The study intends to motivate and encourage teachers of higher education, organizations, students and ministries of education for student-centred learning. Lawton (1983) maintains that the concept of curriculum can be placed on a continuum. One end would comprise a narrow definition in terms of specific taught content while the other would encompass a broader interpretation which includes the whole of the educational experience. This latter interpretation includes not only what is taught but how and why and in what socio-cultural and ideological contexts. The sample of the study consists of 200 teachers of higher education selected from both urban and rural areas. A self constructed scale, validated by experts in the field has been used with NAAC criterion as the base and teaching learning, research and student support as components.. To generalize the results the 't' test was used. The analysis shows that there is no significant difference in the Academic Involvement of Urban and Rural area teachers of Higher Education.*

**Index Terms:** Student-centred learning, Academic involvement, Higher Education, Curriculum & Challenges

### **1. Introduction:**

In the educational context, ideas and concepts of constructivism led to the development of a student-cantered approach to learning. The learner is not a passive receiver of knowledge but, rather, an active participant. The learner has the responsibility to accommodate the learning process to his/ her own unique learning style in order to structure his/her own learning. The teacher's role is that of a guide who assists the learner in the difficult process of constructing his/her individual system of knowledge.

The curriculum is the heart of a student's college experience. The curriculum is a colleges or universities primary means of changing students in directions valued by the faculty. Curricula should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised on a regular basis, better to serve the changing needs of both students and society broadly. Faculties are responding to this challenge by turning their attention to what are in many cases long neglected curricular matters.

The National Curriculum Framework has visualized a change in the teacher's role, from that of a mere transmitter of information to that of a facilitator of learning. It has been visualized that teaching learning strategies may assume a variety of modes and may involve a variety of activities on the part of learners and teacher, viz., observation, collection of materials and information, demonstration and experimentation, project, assignments, play way, dramatization, group discussion,

inductive-deductive teaching, problem solving, discovery learning, etc. The use of these strategies will go a long way in making the transaction of curriculum, child- centered.

Education plays vital role in the development of a country so the quality of the education must be monitored. To understand the quality of the education National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) plays great role by accreditation process. The accreditation indicates the particular institute or University meets the standards of the quality in terms of performance, infrastructure, teaching, learning resources, faculty, research organisation, governance , financial well being and student services.

#### **Need for the Study:**

What we need today is quality in Higher Education. In the preset context to enhance the quality NAAC has been established and has given parameters of quality.

The study has made an attempt to focus on few of the parameters given by NAAC to study the parameters of teachers in the present context. The main purpose of the study is to study the Academic Involvement of Higher Education teachers and to find out difference in their Academic Involvement in respect to locale and to suggest measures for student centric learning as a part of hidden curriculum.

#### **Five Characteristics of Learner- Cantered Teaching:**

- ✓ Learner- centred teaching engages students in the hard, messy work of learning.
- ✓ Learner- centred teaching includes explicit skill instruction.
- ✓ Learner- centred red teaching encourages students to reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning it.
- ✓ Learner- centred d teaching motivates students by giving them some control over learning processes.
- ✓ Learner centred teaching encourages collaboration.

#### **Trends in Higher Education:**

Educators are no longer thinking about how they want to teach students-instead, they're focusing on how students want to learn, and on creating the multidisciplinary, multi-generational learning communities needed to solve the complicated issues facing the world today. Higher Education in India is undergoing rapid changes. The challenges ahead are multifaceted and multidimensional.

Though the data show a massive growth in the number of students' enrolment in colleges/universities, holistic view reveals that still only a meagre of the total population has access to Higher Education. Globalization and privatization are imposing new challenges but the nations are still entangled in solving the basic problems of accessibility to higher education for all.

In the wake of the transition from elitist to mass education, universities worldwide are under pressure to enhance access and equity, on the one hand, and to maintain high standards of quality and excellence, on the other. Today the notion of equity not only implies greater access.

#### **Academic Involvement AND Student Centric Learning:**

The National Curriculum Framework has visualized a change in the teacher's role, from that of a mere transmitter of information to that of a facilitator of learning. It has been visualized that teaching learning strategies may assume a variety of modes and may involve a variety of activities on the part of learners and teacher, viz., observation, collection of materials and information, demonstration and experimentation, project, assignments, play way, dramatization, group discussion, inductive-detective teaching, problem solving, discovery learning, etc. The use of these strategies will go a long way in making the transaction of curriculum, child-centred.. Therefore, a teacher not only needs heavy degrees but should have a vision, capacity

and involvement to impart meaningful knowledge and inspire students for achieving creative ends in life.

**Study Related to Academic Involvement:**

Usha and Sasikumar (2007) conducted a study on teacher commitment as predictors of job satisfaction. The result showed that there was significant relationship between teacher commitment and job satisfaction of secondary school teaches. Among the selected variables the best predictor of job satisfaction of secondary school teachers is teacher commitment. Teacher education is no longer a training process but an education strategy for enabling teachers to teach and concern for their well-being. NCTE (1998)

**Objectives of the Study:**

To study the difference in the Academic involvement among teachers of Higher Education with respect to locale.

**Hypotheses:**

There is no significant difference in the Academic involvement among teachers of Higher Education with respect to locale.

**Methodology:**

The sample of the study consist of 200 teachers of Higher Education, selected from both Urban and Rural areas. A self constructed scale, validated by experts in the field has been used with NAAC criterion as the base and teaching learning, research and student support as components. To generalize the result the 't' test was used. The analysis shows that there is no significant difference in the Academic Involvement of Urban and Rural area teachers of Higher Education.

Table 1: 't' Test related to Academic involvement

Locality	N	Mean	S.D.	't' Value	Result
Urban	100	67.91	11.09	0.76	Not significant at 0.05 level
Rural	100	66.74	10.88		

**Curricular Challenges, Suggestions and Teachers Role in Meeting These Challenges:**

A shift from teacher to Student-centred learning makes teachers job more challenging and stressful especially when the teacher is academically involved. The teacher needs to be equipped with, to combat these.

Planning, globalisation, discipline, technology, student background, individual differences and peer relation are some of the challenges which the teacher may encounter in his/her Academic Involvement.

With the change in the education paradigm where the focus is put on the students' independent learning, a special emphasis should be put not just on the teacher's pedagogical and scientific activities but also on their self-development.

One of the problems that students are suffering from in student-centred learning is that they have to work in teams. In fact some students find it difficult to work in teams because it requires team skill and they have not been taught team skills. So, they may complain about being in teams. In addition to the above stated

- ✓ It takes more time
- ✓ Not suitable for large classes
- ✓ Not enough learning materials
- ✓ Student Feels nervous, embarrassed, or tongue-tied

Students should be given few sessions on the team work skills at the beginning of the semester to overcome such problem. The students might find the problem of

misconception, when they prepare themselves for the class. They sometimes read some ideas or concepts and construct the wrong knowledge in their minds.

So, it would be better if the teacher explain the materials on the CD, or give the students the material in a clear and easy way. The student centred learning can be really an opportunity for those students who love to be fully involved in the learning and teaching processes in the class.

- ✓ Teachers academic Involvement can be improved by inducting quality oriented objectivity in merit promotions of teaching faculty.
- ✓ Specification of weightages for teaching, research publications/supervision would help in making this transparent and credible;
- ✓ Examination reforms, gradually shifting from the terminal, annual and semester examinations to regular and continuous assessment of student's performance in learning should be implemented.
- ✓ Quality of higher education can improve considerably through an extensive and optimal use of audio-visual technologies and Internet. The curriculum should be so designed to make good use of these modern developments;
- ✓ Setting up of NAAC has sent the right and positive signals for generating and promoting awareness of the urgent need of quality up gradation of Colleges and Universities.
- ✓ Students should be involved in curriculum design; students" assessments should be done with the view to encourage improvement rather than competition among the students.
- ✓ Parents/families also have a role to play in encouraging their wards to socialize and take active part in classroom activities. Academic socialization should not be seen as a taboo. It should rather be encouraged as it is geared toward academic excellence.
- ✓ There is need for proper understanding and synthesizing of the course content by the students. Teachers therefore need to go beyond power point teaching style and introduce students to additional course resources. This will broaden their understanding of the subject matter.
- ✓ Curriculum Planning and Management should be studied in the perspective of knowledge management.
- ✓ Integrated approach by involving experts from different fields with major focus on sharing of experiences in a holistic framework and Students should be involved in curriculum design; students" assessments should be done with the view to encourage improvement rather than competition among the students.
- ✓ . Teachers should therefore ensure, no matter the circumstances, that teaching pedagogy strongly encourages students" participation in the class.
- ✓ Multidisciplinary curriculum must be developed with a view to cater to the needs and fulfilment of expectations of learners, teachers parents, employers and society in general.
- ✓ Context, specificity and inquiry oriented experience must be reflected in the curriculum. Learners' participation in the generation of knowledge must be the focus of constructivist curriculum. Problem solving abilities must be developed through experimentation life-like situations.
- ✓ Curriculum transaction should involve social negotiation and mediation. Encourage group activities and make optimum use of peer as resources of higher learning.

- ✓ Learner's involvement must be encouraged to link previous experience with present learning. The learner should have full opportunity to scrutinize the learning experiences.
- ✓ The principles of self regulation, self mediation and self awareness on the part of learners must be reflected in curriculum transaction.
- ✓ During curriculum transaction learners should be assessed formatively on a continuous basis to create the basis for acquiring new experiences.

**Conclusion:**

With dedication towards the profession and with well planned short term and term planning of classroom activities both urban and rural area teachers can face the curricular challenges in student centric learning.

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