

TEACHING TECHNIQUES USEFUL FOR LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION

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Teaching:-

India has glorious tradition of teaching and learning, where education was pursued for the sake of knowledge and mukti and not for materialistic benefits. Knowledge is regarded as highest virtue of man. Institutions like Nalanda, Takshashila attracted scholars from abroad for their power of knowledge. There was closer relationship between teacher and taught and the instruction was individualized.

According to Radhakrishnan Commission (1948) as cited by Sivaswaroop, P¹ our ancient teachers tried to teach subjects and impart wisdom to their respective disciples. Their idea was based on “Wisdom alongwith Knowledge.” Plato emphasized that no amount of factual information

would make ordinary man into educational man unless something is awaked in him.

Thus education is ancient times emphasized to impart values to students besides knowledge. The ideal was “Wisdom with Knowledge.” The teaching was personalized with teacher and disciples used to imbibe the values of the teacher and treat him as “role model” (mentor). Teaching was regarded in high esteem.

Teaching is one major aspect of academic life, and it is the input from the personal scholarship and research expertise of the staff that give university teaching its special flavour. Teaching’s major components are content, communication and feed back.

Here goes the saying of Adi Sankara, *“I bow down to my most adorable teacher who is all*

knowing and as, by imparting knowledge to me, save me from the great ocean of birth and deaths filled with ignorance.”

Naik A.K.and Rao U.K.² have given the characteristics of teaching programs as under.

Teaching programmes must have sufficient flexibility to accept new information, opinion or analysis so that the excitement felt by the teacher for the subject can be brought to the student, the process of the student in attaining the intended learning outcomes. Since a module will normally have several intended outcomes, different components of the module will be suited to different teaching and learning processes and such a module should be presented through a variety of appropriate methods so far as the resources allow. The methods best suited to attaining insight or the skills of problem solving are different from those suited to acquiring knowledge or those suited to developing personal and transferable skills.

The learning experience can be achieved through participation in lectures, seminars, tutorials, through library and computing facilities, through periods of study in other institutions. Design of teaching technology can be objective based, skill – based, competency – based, learn – style – based and model based. It may include for large/ small groups, involving seminars, symposiums, panel discussions, team teaching, workshops, projects, group discussions, mock interviews, case assignments/ discussion, brain

storming, bizz group techniques, tutorials, simulation approaches.

Care should be taken in the strategies for classroom management such as discipline, rhythm, class culture, teacher attention, teacher’s verbal control, self management, students involvement, group – management, and so on. By improving classroom strategies, promoting student collaboration addressing diverse learning styles, facilitating student and course evaluation, supporting active learning we can make a fruitful teaching – learning environment. An effective teacher evaluation process involves collecting evidence from various stake holders, for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the teaching learning process. A successful evaluation generates outcomes that are valid, reliable and indicate directions and action for improvement.

According to S.R. Ranganathan³ “Indeed, teaching is an art and the teacher is an artist. No theory or system can ever be a substitute for a teacher. The good teacher transcends theories and systems’ No system can make a bad teacher into a good one. But a good system is better than a bad one, in so far as it prevents the bad teacher from becoming too bad and helps the great mass of pedestrian teachers to be less bad than they would be.” The phrase “change for better” seems to be the talk of every human sphere. The need of the day is to accommodate these. The very purpose of education is to improve the quality of national well – being. Hence education for library and information science, needs to take into

consideration the social, demographic, economic, political, educational and technological changes, as all these have immediate learning of the profession.⁴

As mentioned by Mahapatra, G.S.⁵ the library and information science in the country has thus reached a very crucial point as regards to the job opportunities for the library and information professionals and the overall image of the profession. Library and information science education is directly related to the professional status of the library professionals that is on the capabilities of the librarians in storing organizing, retrieving information and the overall management of libraries/ information centers. Therefore there should not be any gap in the library and information science education and the libraries/ information centers. Library and information science on most run in parallel with the development of libraries. So the library and information science teachers and the library professionals should work together to produce and develop qualitative, dynamic and efficient library professionals who can meet the expectations of this 21st century.

Need of a variety of Methods:-

For the achievement of comprehensive objective of teaching library and information science, methods are needed which could expose the students to knowledge and experiences helpful in the development of understanding, critical thinking, practical skills and interest. To equip the

students with required skills, one has to adopt a variety of methods.

Each subject of Library and Information Science demands different approach of teaching. For example, a teacher can not teach computers only through lecture method. It is necessary for the teacher to give students hands on experience on computers. As a result of information explosion in the field of Library & Information Science (LIS); the establishment of numerous new LIS schools in the country opening of new courses in the existing schools, social awaking and development of new teaching technology, there is an urgent need of reconsidering the teaching methods in the LIS education in India.

The University Grants Commission CDC Report (2001)⁶ has given stress and mentioned that students and teachers of LIS and Practicing Librarians should know that teaching methods are also outmoded in a course like LIS. Black Board method, which will continue to remain the basic mode of teaching, has to be supplemented with education technology and the students are required to be given adequate knowledge and hands on experience in the use of modern technology.

Lecture Method:

It is the oldest method of teaching given by philosophy of idealism. The lecture method refers to the teaching procedure involved in the clarification or explanation to the students of

some major idea. This method lays emphasis on the presentation of the content.⁷

Project Method:-

Being an activity oriented method; it provides learning experience suited to individuals with varied requirement. But in present modes, the method requires improvement. Babita Jaiswal⁸ has mentioned that at the time of assigning the topics to the students, teachers should keep in mind the following factors.

Seminar/ Colloquium Method:-

One of the great responsibilities of a teacher of a professional discipline is to help the student develop the ability of systematic thinking and of precise expression. This method is best suited for this purpose. According to this method, a topic of professional interest is selected and a proposition is formulated. A student or group of students is made to collect pertinent information on the topic from the various sources of information covering its pros and cons. The collected information is systematically organized to develop a paper for presentation. The paper is then circulated among the participants.

Discussion Method:-

In this method, the teacher selects his topic of teaching and views its information contents as answers to a sequence of questions. The teacher

makes a record of these questions. Students are asked to come prepared by reading about the topic from different sources of information suggested by him. In the teaching session, the teacher asks the students to answer those questions. The answers received by him forms the basis for the lecture to convert their content into an organized body of knowledge by using the processes of correcting modifying, and enriching. In doing this, the teacher demonstrates the use of the techniques.

This method allows the students to ask for clarification or to make comments. The students feel happy with this as they find themselves as contributors. This method can also be used by asking the students to submit their answers to one or more questions as assignments, and then by holding feedback sessions. The preparatory work based method is only a version of Discussion Method. The study of reading reference sources according to a prescribed proforma is a combination of project method and Discussion Method.

Demonstration-based lecture method or Lecture cum Demonstration Method.

In this method, the teacher demonstrates and explains how he has arrived at the final results, which is taken to be the main topic of teaching. This method is extensively used in teaching sciences, both basic and applied.

In teaching cataloguing, classification, and any professional topic, this method is extremely effective. At a level of application, it takes the

form of a standardized steps oriented method useful for teaching all practical topics. The techniques used for preparatory work to demonstrate this method are usually a combination of analytical technique and synthetic technique, which ultimately takes the form of Information Analysis and Consolidation.

Symposium:-

It is a series of presentation given by two to five persons of notable authority and competencies on different aspects of the same theme or closely related theme. Most of the symposia run between sixty to ninety minutes. LIS departments can organize symposiums on current issues. Once the presentations are over, interaction among the students is encourage and accepted. This method will give a chance to the students to hear notable and competent authorities in the field and ask questions from them.¹⁰

Tutorials:-

In addition to the various teaching methods, tutorials should also be held, which should be chalked out in the regular time table to the department. Those tutorials should be organized in small groups of students and the meetings should be held with individual teachers, in order to have informed discussions, clarifications, interpretations so that the problems of individual students should be solved.¹¹

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