

FLEXIBLE LEARNING AS NEW LEARNING DESIGN IN CLASSROOM PROCESS TO PROMOTE QUALITY EDUCATION

By

D.R. ROBERT JOAN

Assistant Professor, M.Ed. Department, M.E.T. College of Education, Chenbagaramanputhoor, India.

ABSTRACT

Educators in the 21st century realize that students entering the classroom today are much different from those who have come before. Today's students are demanding a change in the classroom because of their ability to gather information faster than any other generation. It gives users on-demand access to the content, tools, training, information, and support they need to create and enhance learning relevance and efficacy through both school-provided and personal technology. Learning is acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing existing, knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. Flexible Learning is a set of educational philosophies and systems, concerned with providing learners with increased choice, convenience, and personalisation to suit the learner. In particular, flexible learning provides learners with choices about where, when, and how learning occurs. Sometimes it also referred to as personalized learning. Quality determines how much and how well children learn and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits. The objective of this paper is to find whether flexible learning in classroom helps to promote quality education. Here the investigator used interview method to fulfil the study. The investigator prepared a flexible learning schedule to find the new learning design in classroom process. The investigator collects the information from the student about the flexible learning design in classroom environment. The flexible learning moulds the learner to plan their activities according to their interest and enthusiasm. It also keeps the mind of learner in a pleasant situation that is out of external fear. Finally the study concludes that flexible learning in classroom helps to promote quality education.

Keywords: Learning, Flexible Learning, New Learning Design, Classroom Processes, Quality Education.

INTRODUCTION

Educators in the 21st century realize that students entering the classroom today are much different from those who have come before. Today's students are demanding a change in the classroom because of their ability to gather information faster than any other generation. To make authentic connections with students, we must change our strategies to fit this new age of students. With the resources available today for use in the classroom, such as interactive software, digital imaging, audio and video creation tools, on-demand video libraries, computers and LCD projectors, and Web 2.0 tools, the hardest job may be choosing which tool to use and how to integrate it into the classroom. It is the greatest time in history to be in a classroom because learning technology is changing at an exponential rate, and our students can thrive with it.

Significance of this paper

This paper helps to find the importance of flexible learning. Now-a-days high percentage of students are benefiting from online learning. Many students are joining in online course and it helps to use technology fully. It's a learning environment that includes both wired and wireless access for students, teachers, and parents. It gives users on-demand access to the content, tools, training, information, and support they need to create and enhance learning relevance and efficacy through both school and personal technology. The purpose of this study was to improve achievement for every student. and hence the present study was needed for this situation.

Flexible learning

According to Shurville et al. (2008) "Flexible Learning is a set of educational philosophies and systems, concerned with

providing learners with increased choice, convenience, and personalisation to suit the learner. In particular, flexible learning provides learners with choices about where, when, and how learning occurs”.

Flexible learning approaches are often designed using a full range of teaching and learning theories, philosophies and methods to provide students with opportunities to access information and expertise, contribute ideas and opinions, and correspond with other learners and mentors. This may occur through the use of internet-based tools such as Virtual Learning Environments or Learning Management Systems, discussion boards or chat rooms; and may be designed as a "blended" approach, with content available electronically and remotely, as well as "face-to-face" classroom tutorials and lectures.

Learning design

A 'learning design' is defined as the description of the teaching-learning process that takes place in a unit of learning (e.g., a course, a lesson or any other designed learning event). The key principle in learning design is that it represents the learning activities and the support activities that are performed by different persons (learners, teachers) in the context of a unit of learning.

New learning design

Students must consider potential idiosyncrasies with various learning devices (e.g., tablet, phone, PC), infrastructure requirements (e.g., cellular network, wi-fi, Bluetooth, online), and any special hypothetical circumstances if relevant. Also teach the student strategies for approaching and completing complex and novel tasks. Use the same strategy in different situations to make its use more automatic. The various learning devices, different approaching and the novel tasks are the new learning designs.

New Learning Environments

New learning environments are needed to support technology equipped students at work both individually and in collaborative teams, and to provide environments for what Roger Schank calls “focused work, collaborative work, hands-on project work,” and for presentation and exhibition (Fielding, 1999).

Classroom processes

Carroll's model (1963) was the basis for a number of other attempts to identify and organize the primary variables associated with school learning. Keeping the concept that educators should focus on variables under their control Squires, Huitt, & Segars (1981) proposed that both classroom- and school-level variables should be addressed. They adopted Carroll's student behaviour variable of "Perseverance" and relabelled it "Involvement." However, they added Coverage (the overlap of content taught to content tested) and Success (the rate at which students were successful on assigned academic tasks). Carroll's teacher behaviour variable of "Quality Instruction" was used as a subcategory within classroom processes and the subcategories of "Planning" and "Management" were added. While planning was not addressed by Carroll, management incorporates the variable "Opportunity" in that, one aspect of Management is to use all available classroom time for instruction purposes.

Slavin (2006) took a different approach. His QAIT model redefines Carroll's variables in terms of teacher behaviour, thereby focusing on the classroom teacher as the sole influence on school learning. 'Q' stands for Quality of Instruction and is the same variable proposed by Carroll. 'A' stands for Appropriate Levels of Instruction and redefines the student characteristic variables of Aptitude and Ability to Understand Instruction as a teacher behaviour variable. These two variables are incorporated in the Instruction subcategory of the Squires et al. model. 'I' stands for Incentive and is a redefinition of the student behaviour variable of Perseverance into a teacher behaviour variable. 'T' stands for Time and is essentially equivalent to the Carroll variable of Opportunity. These two variables are incorporated in the Management subcategory in the Squires et al. model.

Quality education

According to the Education for all: Global Monitoring Report 2005 - The Quality Imperative (EFA: GMR), two principles characterise most attempts to define quality in education: the first identifies learners' cognitive development as the major explicit objective of all education systems. The second emphasises education's

role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development."

Quality determines how much and how well children learn and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits. It is the teaching and learning process that brings the curriculum to life that determines what happens in the classroom and subsequently the quality of the learning outcomes.

Operational Definition for Key Terms

Flexible Learning

Flexible learning refers to those who are interested in different way of learning namely e-learning, m-learning and online learning (i.e., flexible learning provides learners with choices about where, when, and how learning occurs).

Other Learning

Other learning refers to those who are not interested in flexible learning.

Related Literature

Wilson, Luanne, Boldeman, Ursula (2012) conducted a study on "Exploring ICT Integration as a Tool to Engage Young People at a Flexible Learning Centre".

The Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) Flexible Learning Centres aim to provide a supportive learning environment for young people who find themselves outside of the mainstream secondary schooling system. Drawing on twenty first Century learning principles, the Centres aim to deliver a personalised learning experience with an emphasis on flexibility and individual choice. Provision of a comprehensive curriculum enables young people to make positive future life choices and successfully transition into employment and further training. The aim of this research project has been to work with teaching staff at a Flexible Learning Centre in North Queensland, Australia, to explore the value of integrating ICT in the form of Web 2.0 technologies to enhance young people's engagement with the subject of science. The findings of this case study suggest that ICT integration is effective in revitalising science education interest for

disengaged young people. This may have wider implications in relation to general concerns of declining student interest and participation in science in the secondary years of schooling.

Tucker, Richard; Morris, Gayle (2012) conducted a study on "By Design: Negotiating Flexible Learning in the Built Environment Discipline".

The term "flexible education" is now firmly entrenched within Australian higher education discourse, yet the term is a contested one imbued with a multiplicity of meanings. This paper describes a process designed to elucidate how the idea of flexible education can be translated into teaching models that are informed by the specific demands of disciplinary contexts. The process uses a flexible learning "matching" tool to articulate the understandings and preferences of students and academics of the Built Environment to bridge the gap between student expectations of flexibility and their teacher's willingness and ability to provide that flexibility within the limits of the pedagogical context and teaching resources. The findings suggest an informed starting point for educators in the Built Environment and other creative disciplines from which to traverse the complexities inherent in negotiating flexibility in an increasingly digital world.

Riggs, et. al. (2012) conducted a study on "Flexible Models for Learning English Are Needed for Refugee Mothers".

The importance of English language acquisition for resettlement of refugees is well established, particularly as a pathway to education, employment, health and social connections. A qualitative study was conducted in 2011 in Melbourne, Australia utilising focus groups with 87 refugee background women from Karen, Iraqi, Assyrian Chaldean, Lebanese, South Sudanese and Bhutanese refugee backgrounds. Focus groups and interviews were also conducted with 18 service providers and five bicultural community workers. Several barriers were identified that prevented refugee mothers from learning English; however, some innovative and flexible models appear promising. The development, implementation and evaluation of innovative models and settings for refugee background women with young children to learn English in a culturally appropriate way are essential.

Method used in the present study

The investigator used the interview method to determine the flexible learning as new learning design in classroom process to promote quality education.

Protocol of this paper

This paper helped to identify the present situation of flexible learning as new learning design in classroom process to promote quality education. Here the investigator used interview method to fulfil the study. For that the researcher visited many websites which provided the results related to flexible learning, and gathered lot of information about flexible learning. The investigator prepared a flexible learning schedule to find the new learning design in classroom process. The investigator collected information from the student about the flexible learning design in classroom environment. After collecting the information, the investigator made required analysis and gave the interpretation, findings and recommendations related to the result.

Objectives

To find out that flexible learning in classroom helps to promote quality education.

Population

The population of this study were students who were studying IX in various schools in Kanyakumari district.

Sample

The investigator selected the sample of 100 students in the form of random sampling.

Tools used

A tool is a data gathering device or procedure used for research investigation (Best & Kahn, 2005). Tools are used to collect relevant information of a research problem. They can be used for gathering both quantitative as well as qualitative data. Different kinds of tools whether self-made ones or standardized ones can be used for measuring the variables involved in the study.

For the collection of data, the investigator asked few questions to each students who are studying in schools and noted it for analysis purpose. The questions asked by the investigator were related to their interest in flexible learning

and the marks in their examination. It helped the investigator to complete this study.

Statistical techniques used

Arithmetic and Percentage are the statistical techniques were used in the present study.

Analysis and Interpretation

Distribution of the sample based on flexible learning and other learning is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows 74% of students were interested in flexible learning and 26% of students are not interested in flexible learning.

Distribution of the sample based on academic achievement among the students who are interested in flexible learning and other learning, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that 28% of students scored above 80 in flexible learning, and 23% of students scored above 80 in other learning, 58% of students scored between 65-80 in flexible learning, and 42% of students scored between 65-80 in other learning, 10% of students scored between 50-65 in flexible learning and 19% of students scored between 50-65 in other learning, 4% of students scored below 50 in flexible learning and 16% of students scored below 50 in other learning.

Interpretation

By analysing the data, the investigator found that many students are more willing in the flexible learning, but some of them are learning for control situation. Also the

Learning	N	Percentage
Flexible Learning	74	74
Other Learning	26	26
Total	100	100

Table 1. Flexible learning and other learning

% of score in Half-yearly	No. of Student Interested in Flexible learning	No. of Student not Interested in Flexible learning (other learning)	% of Student interested in flexible learning	% of Student not Interested in Flexible learning
Above 80	21	06	28	23
Between 65-80	43	11	58	42
Between 50-65	07	05	10	19
Below 50	03	04	04	16
Total	74	26	100	100

Table 2. Academic achievement among the students who are interested in flexible learning and other learning

investigator found that students who are more willing in the flexible learning, got best scores in their achievement test.

Findings

The findings show that flexible learning in classroom helps to promote quality education.

Recommendations to the educational institutions

The schools should have teachers with high proficiency and skill of technology. The Managements of the schools must provide adequate infrastructure to establish flexible learning mainly internet facilities. Teachers can make use of technology-based teaching methods. In the era of 21st century, technology has penetrated its roots deeply into every field, especially education. So the students are recommended to learn with help the of internet and other ways of technology-based learning. Thus the educational institutions are required to realize the flexible learning in classroom to expand the children's performance according to their personal willing.

Conclusion

Students should become conscious of enhancing themselves with flexible learning, so that they can come out with flying colours in their profession. They should equip themselves with profound knowledge of technology in order to develop their interest and make their learning easy and effective. Flexible learning moulds the learners to plan their activities according to their interest and enthusiasm. It also keeps their mind in pleasant situation and out of external fear. Thus the study concludes that flexible learning in classroom helps to promote quality education.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mr.D.R. Robert Joan is currently working as an Assistant Professor, M.Ed. Department, M.E.T. College of Education, Chenbagaramanputhooor, Tamilnadu, India.He has four years of experience in the Colleges of Education and he was presented fourteen papers at National level seminars and four journals. He has participated Workshop Organised by UGC-Academic Staff College, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India, in the topic "E-Content Development".

