

A STUDY ON PEDAGOGICAL INITIATIVES IN COMMERCE TEACHING FOCUSING ON ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AND SOCIAL COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

In this competitive global scenario, the task of education is not only to edify people with the knowledge or transmit information to students; but to nurture diverse imagination moves, techno pedagogical skills, information communication skills, desirable attitudes, skills and competencies to capacitate learners in the changed global milieu. Commerce education should stress on imparting practical skills that nurtures entrepreneurial values and attitude among the students so that they are motivated to be enterprising. The investigator used simple descriptive survey using interview protocol with focus domains as (a) regnant pedagogical transaction modes of learning commerce at Higher Secondary School level (b) Obstructions and challenges confronted in the process of chiseling the pedagogic modalities by stakeholders of education (c) designing alternate dimensionalities as an offshoot for conceptualization of entrepreneurial skills and social competence. This was employed for a select sample of 100 teachers selected at random handling commerce. The study reveals that educators should move away from text and implement a curriculum that involve more hands on, out of the box activities that spur creative thinking and true entrepreneurial learning. The study aided the investigator to gain an insight into the varied dimensions required for vitalizing instructive environment for teachers and students alike to interact effectively with the instructional content.

Key words

Entrepreneurial skills, social competence, creative thinking, interview protocol

INTRODUCTION

Education is imperative for the welfare and endurance of society. Innovative change is the omnipresent attribute of the emerging knowledge society. In this competitive global scenario, the task of education is not only to edify people with the knowledge or transmit information to students; but to nurture diverse imagination moves, techno pedagogical skills, information communication skills, desirable attitudes, skills and competencies to capacitate learners to participate in the changed global milieu. As an effective instructional practitioner, teachers who are information analysts, visionary trend setters upgraded in classroom performances, recharge students thinking and designs instructional practices for transforming information. When students learn through inquiry oriented approach, by designing, planning and executing initiatives in groups, it has a metamorphic effect on their perception, their relationship to learning and sense of their own place in the world around them paving the way to develop the diverse portfolio of skills that are increasingly in demand by employers thereby fostering an innovation ecosystem for education. Learners should be active agents in their own learning which has its roots in constructivist theory. The existing gap between theory and practice can be bridged by having application of contemporary theory in classroom settings (Cranenburgh, 2014). Educators should realize cognitive ability is not the sole determinant of individuals' aptitude to flourish in today's society. Development of a repertoire of instructional strategies, learner friendly experiences and innovative classroom settings responsive to diversity will offer opportunities towards acquisition of social

competencies by learners. Classrooms with rich instructional context challenges the learners to practice and develop higher order skills and make the classroom a place of vibrant and successful learning. In order to attain these objectives the investigator felt that commerce education should place prominence on imparting pragmatic skills such as communication skills, analytical skills, problem solving, team work, entrepreneurial skills, conflict management skills which are relevant in all commerce related endeavors. The teaching method should embrace innovative pedagogic modalities relevant for transacting practical skills, oriented towards the industry by integrating theoretical knowledge with practical aspects through suitable pedagogic modes.

Need and significance of the study

Commerce education should stress on imparting practical skills that nurtures entrepreneurial values and attitude among the students so that they are motivated to be enterprising. Real learning is the interplay between experience, discourses, reflection, judgment and action. Education can provide the perspectives on how human life can be reconciled with the demands of the environment so that survival, growth and development remain achievable. Children acquire varied skills naturally while budding up in their environment by observing life and the world around them by analyzing social issues. An effective commerce curriculum transaction process enable student to realize the social issues confronted through reflective observations and sharpens the 21st century skills and related competencies mandated by the dynamic business world. Entrepreneurs have expressed that one of the hefty restraints on future growth is lack of talented, highly skilled and entrepreneurial workers. In order to meet the needs of twenty first century economy, there must be entrepreneurially driven advances in the educational system. It is observed that the pass-outs of higher secondary course have theoretical background of various aspects of business and trade. When it comes to the practical knowledge, the results are rather poor as the required skills have not been developed in them. This is a general situation, which influences the acceptability of the students by the industry. The entrepreneurial ethics, attitudes, skills and competencies should be nurtured from schools days. The global cascade in the restructuring of education spotlights on numerous issues in educational set up. In this globalised, technologically vibrant society, teachers with both pedagogical and entrepreneurship skills can only be able to refine their students, to face challenges of the present day world. If the students have to be innovative with self efficacy, teachers should expose them with a series of realistic issues of life and corporate world to make them powerful to face the challenges with courage and commitment through dynamic instructional mechanisms in commerce. As a curriculum manager, teachers are change catalyst in crafting an effervescent value system through pedagogic modes, appropriate classroom discourses, interactive learning space, support systems and assessment practices that prompt effective curriculum transaction. (Antony.V.R, 2015). Commerce is both academical and vocational discipline focusing on developing entrepreneurial skills, problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, monitoring of environment, communication skills and conflict management skills by bridging and intertwining conceptual frames. The research question framed is

- ✓ Is there exists any novel challenge in the prevailing instructional practices of commerce at Higher Secondary School level?

Hypothesis of the study

1. The predominant pedagogical functions for transacting commerce curriculum at higher secondary school level are inadequate in upbringing entrepreneurial skills and social competence.

Objectives of the study

1. To analyze the predominant pedagogical functions for transacting commerce curriculum at Higher Secondary school level in upbringing entrepreneurial skills and social competence.

Methodology in brief

In the primal phase, investigator analyzes regnant classroom practices in commerce amongst teacher educators and select teachers handling commerce by means of interview protocol. The investigator used simple descriptive survey using interview protocol with focus domains as (a) regnant pedagogical transaction modes of learning commerce at Higher Secondary school level (b) obstructions and challenges confronted in the process of chiseling the pedagogic modalities by stakeholders of education (c) designing alternate dimensionalities as an offshoot for conceptualization of entrepreneurial skills and social competence. This was employed for a select sample of 100 teachers including 29 teacher

educators, 28 experts in the field of commerce education and 43 higher secondary school teachers selected at random handling commerce. The analysis of the data procured through interview protocol throws light into spectacular domains to be relegated and analyzed with percentage computation. The specifics are portrayed as follows.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

A) Analysis of practitioners' outlook concerning regnant modes of learning commerce at higher secondary level.

The disclosures of practitioners regarding the regnant instructional mechanisms employed to empower learners in commerce education items were analyzed in this respect. The deliberations of the practitioners insinuated that majority (92%) of the teachers are practicing curriculum transaction modes like activity oriented approach and discussion method in their classrooms while very few teachers earmarked with high academic grounding opined that they are practicing some innovative strategies like collaborative learning, brainstorming, and the like. Few practitioners are cognizant of these innovative modalities, but are not practicing the advanced instructional practices which may be due to the traditional climate that resists changes or routine inhibitions or due to the lack of leadership that would encourage and motivate the use of new methodologies. The efficaciousness of regnant pedagogic modes in seeding ideas of dispositions allied to entrepreneurial skills among learners was synchronized through the interview protocol. While analyzing their responses it is observed that majority of the teachers selected for the study placed it as not at all sufficient (86%), a small proportion of the teachers opined moderately sufficient (11%) and negligible proportion of the practitioners were of the opinion as sufficient (3%). None of them opined that the prevailing classroom practices are competent enough in unraveling the set aspects of entrepreneurial skills. A sizeable number of the practitioners are of the notion that the prevailing activity oriented approach is not sufficient in aggrandizing entrepreneurial skills among learners. A pedagogic transformation in the classroom setting and the educational practices will engraft entrepreneurship competencies among learners. While prioritizing the discernments emerged out of the scatter plots of the facts reveals that by way of pioneering pedagogic practices with a break up of progressive skills will endow learners with far ranging framework of entrepreneurial mindset to enter into the world of work in the globally challenged arena.

The interview protocol unearths the usually implemented strategies in commerce classes for visualizing constituent aspects of expertise in social competence. The cerebrations of this item disclosed that a good share of the practitioners (94%) are pursuing large group instruction and lecturing in their classes while modest number of teachers (4%) commended that they are employing certain strategies like co-operative learning, computer assisted learning, field trips, brainstorming and small group instructions. Although nugatory of teachers were only cognizant of these innovative instructional strategies, they were not pursuing now. Very few teachers with academic accomplishments and experiences have the explicit proficiency and competence in connecting contextual issues to meet those challenges while implementing the strategies. While reflecting on outcomes to be attained by students while executing certain particularized learning strategies the outlook of teachers in respect of upshots accomplished regarding the effectiveness of strategies are rated in table 1.

Table .1: Analysis on practitioner's outlook regarding regnant modes of learning commerce.

Strategies	Outcome expected	Percentage of opinion
Lecturing	1.Knowledge acquisition	95%
	2.Amassing information	
Small group instruction	1.Individual accountability and responsibility	90%
	2.Increased motivation	
Case studies	1.Real world experience, problem solving	

	2.Decision making in complex situations	80%
Entrepreneurs/ practitioners in class room	1.Comprehensive business planning & ability to manage change, innovation	89%
	2.Exposure to business practices	
Venture simulation	1.Practical experience fostering managerial outlook	
	2. Leading effective teams	87%
Industry visits	1.Exposure to industrial practices	
	2.Sensitize students to practical challenges of business world	86%
Training	1.Fosters skill needed for business networking	
	2.Fosters conflict management, negotiation skills, team building and communication skills	84%

The above table encompassed teacher's notion concerning outcomes anticipated from the target group towards execution of specified instructional practices.

While typecasting the gamut of abilities possessed by learners at higher secondary level a considerable percentage of practitioners remarked that the learners' are at novice level (86%); where as some teachers opined that the students are at basic level (12%); proficient level (2%); and none at highly advanced level exhibiting entrepreneurial skills and social competencies. That is why a significant share of learners at higher secondary level evinces a paucity of entrepreneurial skills and social competencies even after the completion of course using prevalent pedagogic transaction modes. From the interface with practitioners, it is affirmed that prevailing curriculum transaction modalities are ineffective in edifying the innate potentials of learners with respect to entrepreneurial skills and social competence such as problem solving, decision making, creative thinking skills, general entrepreneurial skills, communication skills, team work skills and conflict management skills. This can be summed up that most of the practitioners are aware of the precepts of different instructional strategies but they face restraints while implementing in their pedagogical sphere.

B) Obstructions and challenges confronted in the process of chiseling the pedagogic mechanisms by practitioners in commerce discipline at higher secondary level

In this part of the interview, the investigator dealt with the obstructions and challenges experienced in the pedagogical transaction of commerce for enhancing competencies among learners at higher secondary level. The particulars of reactions for this purpose are portrayed in table 2.

Table 2: Responses of practitioners with regard to obstructions experienced

Sl. No.	Obstructions experienced	Opinion %
1	Troubles with school administration	90 %
2	Lack of funds and resources	67 %
3	Time constraints	86 %
4	Lack of self-confidence for implementation	92 %
5	Difficulty in acquisition of local business contacts	96 %
6	Class room management tactics	93 %

7	Dearth in learner friendly curriculum	79 %
8	Lack of support from colleagues	82 %
9	Not abreast with theoretical and pedagogical practices	85 %
10	Absence of pertinent instructional mechanism	98 %

The outcomes of table 2 expose responses of practitioners with regard to constrictions and challenges encountered in chiseling innovative pedagogic modalities. The most cited challenge faced by teachers was absence of pertinent instructional modality (98%), lack of funds and resources (67 %), lack of support from colleagues (82%), not abreast with knowledge about theoretical and pedagogical practices (85%), dearth in learner friendly curriculum (79%). Some teachers cited problems with school administration. Teachers found it difficult to acquire local business contacts (96%) mostly because of lack of time to spend pursuing those contacts. Teachers opined that lack of time and resources were the impediments to take their classes to business establishments. Practitioners also ascribed that lack of networking with resource persons, lack of confidence for implementation of strategies were also the impediments to adopt advanced pedagogic practices. Furthermore, they add time element as another constraint in the smooth carrying out of the programme.

C) **Designing supplements as an offshoot for escalating conceptualization of entrepreneurial skills and social competence**

While responding to the supplements for conceptualization of entrepreneurial skills and social competence of commerce students at higher secondary level, the teachers reciprocated with alluring suggestions. A reasonable spectrum of practitioners in commerce while responding, suggests challenge based learning activities(78%), problem based learning activities (84%), experiential learning (87%), training staff in entrepreneurship (92%), curriculum revitalization (80%), using appropriate models of teaching (90%), seeding ideas of critical disposition (88%), student entrepreneurship clubs (70%), institution industry intersay (85%) as the alternate modes for inducing favourable environment for heightening entrepreneurial skills and social competence among commerce students. A considerable proportion of the teachers in commerce (58%) who were going through professional advancement programmes, articulated their perspectives in practicing innovative pedagogic modalities, as a way to foster academic resilience, creative thinking, problem solving and decision making in the instructional processes of commerce education in the twenty first century. The remaining proportion (42%) of the select teachers who possess genuine interest in formulating new glimpses in the pedagogical panorama of commerce teaching pointed out other approaches to enable learners to study business activities in the form of interactive studies, developing business incubators for each phases of schooling, ICT oriented learning, industry visits, industry apprenticeship programmes for transacting the subject matter in the learning space of commerce at higher secondary level.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The practitioners suggested to implement a curriculum that involve more hands on, out of the box activities that spur creative thinking and true entrepreneurial learning by collaborating with institutions, providing more recharge provisions for teachers for enhancing entrepreneurial skills among learners. Other suggestions for improving learning of commerce include creating a network of teachers who are competent to nurture entrepreneurial skills among learners, holding more business simulations for students, having more business task competitions and empowering quality trends by practicing innovative modalities in transaction of subject matter. Practitioners also exhorted to widen the structural bases by including activities that allow learners to be more creative, adding a service learning component through institution industry intersay, having a more structured curriculum focusing on idea generation, business plan writing and adding team building exercises. As a teacher educator in commerce, the investigator herself experienced certain hurdles in the instructional mechanisms being practiced in schools which in turn resulted in poor performance level among learners to cope up with the global challenges. Even though most of the practitioners in commerce are very enthusiastic in exercising effective and enterprising pedagogical mechanisms, the

investigator felt certain flaws in the current method of education, one among them being the paucity of upgraded instructional modality. Consequently the investigator herself deems it indispensable to develop appropriate pedagogic mechanisms in the commerce learning space for the emanation of entrepreneurial skills, social competence, academic performance and professional excellence in the present global era among higher secondary students. (Antony.V.R, 2015). This study registered the imperativeness of customizing the prevailing curriculum transaction modes through enrooting learner centered instructional methods. The results of the regnant pedagogical transaction ways of learning commerce using interview protocol, primarily focusing on theoretical constructs and praxis, obstructions and challenges along with designing supplements for chiseling conceptualization of entrepreneurial skills and social competence among commerce students at higher secondary school level aided the investigator to gain an insight into the varied dimensions required for vitalizing instructive environment for teachers and the students alike to interact effectively with the instructional content.

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