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## 1

## Activity-Based Methods and Approaches of Teaching- The Need of the Hour

### Abstract

*Teaching is an art as well as science. Pedagogy is the science of teaching and its application makes the act of teaching an art. Activity-based methods and approaches of teaching have been advocated by educational documents. Whether it is national education commissions, national education policies or different school and teacher education frameworks all put emphasis on activity-based teaching and learning. NCF-FS (2022) and NCFSE (2023) also advocate in the same way. Activities-based teaching methods and approaches are many and these need to be employed in our education system for effective teaching and better learning. Keeping in view the nature of content and psychological attributes of the learner's activity-based methods & approaches like Incident, Case Study, Simulation, Games/ Simulation Games, Role Play, Prioritization Exercises, etc may be employed. Methods like Project, Excursion, Laboratory; Heuristic, Seminar, etc may also be employed. Activities -based methods and approaches have their relative merits and limitations, but based on the characteristics of learners & learning these methods and approaches help effective teaching and better learning. What is needed today to promote activity-based teaching and learning.*

**Key Words:** Activity-based, Incident, Case Study, Simulation, Role Play, Prioritization Exercise

## Introduction

Methods and approaches of teaching largely influence teaching-learning process and that is why all the education commissions (Radhakrishnan, Mudaliar and Kothari), all the national education policies (1968, 1986/1992, 2020) and all the curriculum frameworks developed by NCTE and NCERT (1975, 1978, 1988, 1998, 2005, 2009 and now 2023) speak on the issue in some way or other. We usually believe that pedagogy is concerned with either school education or teacher education and it is not so useful for higher education. It is useful for higher education as well and the education system is working on it. The updated curriculum of UGC Academic Staff College (now known as UGC Human Resource Development Center) meant for its Orientation Programme (now known as Induction Programme) indicates that our higher education system too accepts the need of pedagogy and teaching methodology an important element of teaching-learning process. Methods and approaches influence the teaching-learning as the pedagogy science concludes. Specific method and/or types of methods influence the effectiveness of teaching. Selection of method is influenced by nature of content and age-range of the learners.

Activity-based learning, experiential learning, learning by doing like concepts have been advocated by the academic world. It is meaningful for the entire human life of learning, but it is more meaningful for the young learners, and especially for the early 5 years of national education policy (2020)'s structure of schooling as 5+3+3+4. Activity-based Learning can be provided by employing Activity-based Teaching in the education process. As stated above this is especially useful for early childhood as the curriculum framework (2023) and draft document (2022) for foundational stage claim. NCF-FS (2022) concludes, "Activities are joyful and encourage the use of all the child's senses." Activities based teaching and learning is not useful for foundation stage only, rather it is beneficial for every stages of learning, especially for the school stages. This view is supported by the NCFSE (2023) where it narrates, "Depending on the matters of study, context and stage of the student, these effective pedagogical approaches would be of a wide range including pedagogy that is more experiential, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, discussion-based, project-based, arts-based, sports-based, and activity-based." Different documents narrate the importance of activity-based learning & activity-based teaching, and encourage for the employment of Activity-based Methods and Approaches of Teaching in the process of teaching-learning.

Methods and approaches of teaching can be classified in terms of teacher-controlled, learner-controlled, individual-controlled and group-controlled. The classification is complete and there is overlapping in the categorization as well; and so there is no need for another category, but some literature also talks in terms of activity-based methods and approaches of teaching. Further, there are some methods where teacher controls the activity and there are some other methods where learners are more involved in the activities. Based upon the fact it may be concluded that some activity based methods and approaches may be placed under the head teacher-centred and some other in the group learner-centred.

In fact, activity based methods of teaching is based on the principle of learning by doing. Student centred methods provide enough opportunity to learners to select and manage the problem under study. In teacher centred activity based methods learners role become of a doer of the task in the light of the teacher, and that is why activity based methods of teaching is placed under the head teacher-controlled methods and approaches of teaching. In both the types of activities-based teaching methods learners are in win-win situation as they get opportunities of work and learn through activities.. Sarangi, D (2008) in terms of science teaching has rightly written, "Activities centered and interactive approaches to classroom transactions are rare. Most pupils learn the scientific concepts in disorganized ways, that too with abundant idiosyncrasies and low content achievement." What Sarangi says regarding science is also true with respect to the teaching of other subjects and disciplines.

In the application of these methods learner requires to learn by doing or participating in activities such as experimenting, constructing, drawing figure, carrying out a project, etc. Methods such as Simulation, Role Play, Gaming, etc are examples of activity based methods of teaching. The non-examples of these activity-based methods are lecture, observed demonstration, storytelling, etc.

## Activities-based Methods and Approaches of Teaching

Following are some Activity-based method and approaches of teaching:

- Incident Method
- Case Study Method
- Simulation
- Games/Simulation Games
- Role Play
- Prioritization Exercises



Project Work, Work-shop, Excursion, Seminar, Laboratory, Heuristic, etc are also among activities-based methods and approaches of teaching. The list presented here is not conclusive, few methods and approaches having direct role of teachers have been given priorities. NCFSE (2000) expresses about self-study skills and these are activity-based as well, "Effective learning takes place when teachers are able to involve the students in the process of learning, by taking them beyond the process of listening to that of thinking, reasoning and doing. In order to promote self-study skills use of library and resource centers need to be encouraged."

**Incident Method:** In incident method the teacher presents before the students reality in small pieces of information from real life. Students are to identify the problem and to recommend needed actions to deal with the identified problem effectively. Individual student reconstruct the incident and in the process put questions from the teachers as and when needed. By collecting related information they define the problem and identify solution(s) to solve it. Before arriving at the best solution the learners use their knowledge and examine different solutions. The teacher makes them aware about the right solution to compare and verify.

The essential features of this incident methods are as: statement of problem, extensive questioning by the participants, necessary information sharing from the part of the teacher, group discussion and recommendations of the solution, etc.

This method focuses on training to the learners to find a workable solution against an identified problem. The focus of method is not to provide knowledge of a particular solution.

**Case Study Method:** In the implication of case study as a method of teaching firstly a case is presented with the help of a hypothetical situation through verbal, written or electronic media. It is similar to incident study, but case study method is more comprehensive in description. As in incident method details are not provided only specific information are forwarded and so in comprehensiveness of description case study method needs more detailed information. As we all know case study as a method of research demands in-depth study here is the same as well.

There is a vital similarity between incident method and case study method that in the application of the both teacher does not present the information directly or indirectly, rather the problem is discussed and solution is determined or identified by the students.

### **Simulation:**

In simulation as a method of teaching in which students learn by performing a task in simulation situation i.e., in artificial or created

situation, not in real situation. In fact, simulation is a working model of reality. Artificial situation is created to discuss and learn the concept or process. General election, nuclear reactor, democratic form of government, corruption, etc like concepts may be taught effectively with the help of simulation method. It is more useful for the study of social sciences or social situations; it is being used or can be used in almost all the subjects. Science students work with or simulate with working models of experiment or machine before the actual experimentation or handling with the machines. History students may understand the strategy of a war like Panipat-I, etc. with the help of simulation. In civics parliament may be taught with the help of simulation. Certain topics of each subject may be taught effectively by simulation. Law students often employ this method in their deliberations.

### **Games/Simulation Games:**

It is almost same to simulation method with only difference in learning or teaching by gaming. Games have the elements of job, competitiveness, motivation, team spirit, cooperation, etc. The simulation game combines the features of a game i.e. rules, playing team, competition, cooperation, etc with technique of simulation, i.e. working model of reality. There is scope for the implication of simulation games in each subject. In this method the teacher makes the rule, scoring scheme, etc and as per the plan students are assigned work or responsibilities.

### **Role Play:**

In this method teaching-learning process moves through playing of different role in which the participants are assigned a role to play in the group. In fact, it is group technique in which the teacher in the light of the content to deliver allots role to students. In teaching-learning process it is being used for different purposes as: to clarify concepts, concretize abstract ideas, etc; to practice skills of human relationship; to release emotional blocks; to empathize with others; to diagnose a problem situation. Among various teaching strategies NCFSE (2000) has placed role play as well. The framework concludes, "Playing games, participating in community singing, role playing, dramatization, discussion, debate, problem solving, discovery learning, creative writing, and supplementary reading may also form an important part of total instructional strategies."

It can be utilized for the teaching of almost all subjects but its implication is more in the study of social sciences and social understanding. Drama in literature can be taught with this method effectively. It can be used in training, skills internalization, preparing for some issues related to life and academic world.

### Prioritization Exercises:

In this method the teacher gives relatively simple activities where the students are given a list of characteristics or solutions to a problem. Students are asked to rank the characteristics or solutions of the problem as per some definite criteria. When individual ranking is completed group discussion is arranged. The method helps to develop the capacity of judgement, communication skill and interpersonal skill. It is based on the principle of thought and expression. In the same manner NCF (2005) opines for participative learning as powerful strategy, "Participatory learning and teaching, emotion and experience need to have a definite and valued place in classroom. While class participation is a powerful strategy, it loses its pedagogical edge when it is ritualized, or merely becomes an instrument to enable teachers to meet their own ends. True participation starts from the experiences of both students and teachers."

### Merits and Limitations

#### Following are the merits of activity based methods:

- It provides opportunity to get knowledge by doing or working.
- Natural urge of the learners satisfy to learn by playing or doing.
- In this learning process learners acquire practice positions.
- It motivates the students more and develops a spirit of competitiveness.
- It is helpful to solve the problems in real life as the experience of working or doing prepares the learner for life problem solving.
- It is more suitable for relieving emotional blocks of the learners as they get opportunity in the process of teaching and learning to express.
- It provides opportunity to the learners to learn and internalize inter-personal skills.
- This method is also helpful in the manifestation of many latent talent, potential and capabilities of learners along with the related personality qualities.
- It develops confidence among learners to act, work, learn, and attempt.
- Teacher in the process more easily comes to know about students learning and their difficulties.

#### Following are the limitations of activity based methods:

- It needs the information about students previous and background knowledge. Students without required background knowledge cannot do the problem as their own.
- It needs an exhaustive planning from the part of a teacher without step-by-step preparation it cannot be employed properly.
- It needs control on teacher in terms of un-due and un-timely explanation of the solutions of the problem.
- It is not so useful for comparatively younger students, specially the little children.
- It also needs prior preparation from the part of the learner.

#### Precautions in Organizing

There are certain pre-requisites of activity-based methods and approaches and so there is the need to take some precautions before organizing or employing activity-based methods and approaches. These precautions are as :

- The organizer ensures that the learners are having the pre-requisite knowledge and skills needed to execute the identified activity. If needed the learners be provided pre-requisite knowledge in advance before the actual implication of the selected activity sessions.
- The organizers of the activity must plan in advance in the light of the nature of the activity keeping in view objectives, material needed, man-power needed, process of teaching process of evaluation, group formation.
- The teacher concerned must learn to employ the selected activity by managing him/her by keeping in mind that the method is based on the principle of learning by doing.

Teachers and organizers are to learn not to intervene during activity in progress, however they may redirect the learner or learners as and which needed.

These precautions or pre-requisites from the part of teacher and learner decide the success of the activity based methods and approaches of teaching. National Education Policy(2020) says about the nature of learning, "Teaching and learning will be conducted in a more interactive manner; questions will be encouraged , and classroom sessions will regularly contain more fun, creative, collaborative, and exploratory activities for students for deeper and more experiential learning." We can claim that

Activity-based Methods and Approaches of Teaching are capable in every respect to attain these specified purposes of the national education policy regarding teaching and learning.

### Conclusion

In essence, activity-based methods and approaches play a crucial role in modern education, aligning with national policies and curriculum frameworks that emphasize experiential learning. These methods, such as Incident, Case Study, Simulation, and Role Play, promote active engagement, problem-solving, and skill development among learners, especially in the foundational stages of education.

While activity-based teaching offers numerous benefits like fostering curiosity and developing essential competencies, it requires careful planning and consideration of learners' needs. Educators must provide adequate support and refrain from excessive intervention during activities to maximize learning outcomes.

By integrating activity-based approaches effectively, educators can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that align with the goals of national education policies. These methods empower students to become active participants in their education, preparing them for lifelong success and fulfillment.

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## 2

# PRASHAST: An Early Intervention for Inclusive Education - A Multi-dimensional Analysis of Academic and Emotional Outcomes

### Abstract

*The study is a comprehensive exploration of the effectiveness of PRASHAST as an early intervention for inclusive education, focusing on its impact on academic and emotional outcomes. Drawing inspiration from the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), this multi-dimensional analysis examined how PRASHAST aligned with educational frameworks. Guided by the principles of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD Act, 2016) and Persons with Disabilities Act (PWD Act, 1995) the study investigated the potential of PRASHAST in fostering equity-based inclusion in education. The study employed a mixed-method research design, combined quantitative surveys and standardized assessments with qualitative interviews. The research objectives encompassed evaluating academic achievements, educator engagement, challenges, benefits, and policy recommendations. Quantitative analysis explored differences in academic outcomes between students undergoing PRASHAST intervention and those who did not. Research contributed nuanced understanding and policy*