



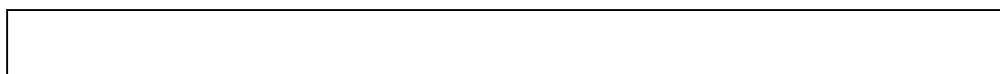
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Innovative Practices in Improving Learning Levels of the Students

Vishwajeet K Yadav

Lecturer, District Institute of Education and Training,
Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Contact No: 094265 77789, Email Id: yvishwajeet69@yahoo.co.in

Dr Mandira Sikdar

Associate Professor & Ph.D Program Co-ordinator
Navrachana University, Vadodara

Contact No: 9898387932, Email Id : mandiras@nuv.ac.in

ABSTRACT

The goal of education is to bring improvement in the quality of teaching- learning process and ensure progress in the learning levels of the children. This is reflected in the goals of access, equity, quality and governance as enlisted in various education policy documents, curriculum frameworks, and also schemes and programs of the Government of India. To achieve these goals, the education functionaries, right from the school to state levels undertake different kinds of activities and explore new ways of transacting the curriculum in order to address the diverse needs of children. Such practices enhance the efficiency of the system and are often pragmatic, creative and ingenious. These practices are called innovations. Innovation is the process of developing an idea into a creative action. In order to develop innovations, we need to have a new environment that encourages innovativeness among the teachers at the elementary level. The teacher is the principle agent whose performance determines the quality of education. Looking to the essential characteristics of innovative practices, it would be interesting to study the effectiveness of the innovative practices with respect to the questions below:

- Will the impact of innovative practices in the improving learning levels of the students?
- To what extent the innovative practices are genuinely interested towards the all-round development of the learners?

In this regard, the paper focus on innovative practices conducted by innovative teachers in Gujarat educational innovation fair under guidance of DIET Vadodara and Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training(GCERT). During 2018-19 to 2019-2020 total 147 primary teachers were displayed in 15 different areas of innovation. The qualitative outcome of these innovative practices has been studied with the help of opinions of 10 innovative teachers with respect to their experiences in adopting innovative practices, the attainment of learning outcomes, replicability, and involvement of every child with joyful learning which is being continued on the basis of their own findings.

Key words: Innovative Practices, Attainment of learning outcomes, replicability.



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Introduction

Education is a pragmatic science like agriculture and medical branches. Therefore, its aims are not only to educate and empower the students but also to sustain the achieved goals at the required level. For this, innovative practices are necessary in the related areas. The quality of education includes the quality of curriculum, the functional competencies of teachers, and the teaching learning processes and practices. Hence the teacher at all stages is supposed to undertake and promote innovation in order to improve the quality of instruction in the classroom. The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers, who can be critical and verify, and not accept, everything they are offered.” (Jean Piaget, 1967). Education is the most important tool, evolved by man, for one’s progress. It is, therefore, no wonder that all dynamic and progressive nations demand an educational system that will take leadership in piloting and managing a future that ensures a better life to all. In the context of developing countries, education will eventually have a great role in the process of sustainable development. Hence, the progress of any society depends mainly on the utilization of the potential of its individuals and the best educational ideas in all disciplines of knowledge. Evidence shows that there has been an enormous advancement of knowledge in every field. In the history of civilization, both knowledge and education have always been predominant factors of progress. Presently, India’s educational purpose is the one that envisages creating a good and valued society, an enlightened life for all its members and using all the intellectual and natural resources to that purpose. Educationist considered to be the most vital and powerful instrument in achieving rapid development, technological progress and creating a social order founded on values of

freedom, socio-economic justice and with equal opportunities for all in all fields. The ultimate aim of the education system is to bring about quality in education such that the education system becomes more and more effective, and renders a positive impact on all the learners. Innovative teaching strategies simply imply knowing or identifying and applying a more facilitative approach.

In teaching a concept, topic or theme. The strategy itself may not necessarily be new but its use for that particular topic, concept or theme may be novel. In other words, it is using a combination of various teaching strategies that are appropriate for the learners in order to ensure more effective teaching. The search for innovative teaching strategies is natural of the fact that different situations, teaching topics, learner's cognitive readiness, concepts being taught, skills intended to be developed in learners- demand for different teaching approaches to be used. Therefore, a teacher who is not aware of a variety of such strategies can neither attempt to use them in the first place nor use them adequately. Thus for any good teacher or teacher educator it is essential to incorporate the use of innovative and creative teaching practices.

What is innovation?

Innovation is typically understood as the introduction of something new and useful, for example introducing new methods, techniques, or practices or new products and services. Such: definitions of innovation include: Process of making improvements by introducing something new, Process of translating new ideas for improvement of teaching learning, Process of translating new ideas for improvement of teaching learning, A new idea, method or device Successful operational of new ideas, Changes that create a new dimension of performance. A creative idea that is realized, Capabilities of continuously realizing a desired change Innovation is a purposeful organized and risk-taking change introduced into any work organization or school system to ensure efficiency and increased productivity. It is the introduction of new ideas, methods, strategies and techniques for doing things into the school system for the purpose of improving both internal and external efficiency of the system.

Objectives:

The study was based on the following objectives:

- 1.To study the innovative abilities of the innovative teachers.
- 2.To identify the pedagogical processes of classroom teaching of the innovative teachers.
- 3.To identify the genuine interests of innovative teachers in all round development of the children

Research questions:

The following research questions were proposed to achieve the objectives of the study:

1. What type of innovations have been carried out and practiced by the innovative teachers?
2. What pedagogical processes of classroom teaching have been followed by the innovative teachers?
3. To what extent the innovative teacher is genuinely interested and is working towards the all-round development of the learners?

Approaches of identify innovative teachers:

Innovations are of no use if they do not have positive impact. Identifying such teachers who have experimented with positive results, sharing their work, and building a platform around such innovations for developing other teachers is the aim of the Educational Innovations. Since its inception in early 2013, about 5500 innovations have been identified in the state. These innovations are solutions to specific educational problems that the teachers have faced. If shared and discussed, they can inspire other teachers to solve their own problems, thus raising the quality of education. The DIETs of Gujarat are playing a leading role in this movement. Every DIET now has a DIET Innovation Cell, with one lecturer acting as a nodal point for the activity.

To identify innovative teachers, a multi-pronged approach was followed. At the DIET level, various writing workshops were organized where teachers identified by the DIETs, BRCs and CRCs were invited. In these workshops, the teachers were guided to write about innovations implemented by them, in a pre-defined format. Further, follow-up field visits were conducted for innovations identified through the writing workshop. Extensive field visits were also done to scout for innovations not covered through the writing workshop. A process for submitting innovations online was also put into place and modules on how to do so were made available to DIETs, BRCs, CRCs as well as the teachers. Certain challenges were identified in the process of submission, identification and documentation of innovations. In terms of submission, online entries were found to be fewer than physical entries due to connectivity issues and relatively low technical competencies of teachers. While a large number of innovations have been submitted, a great number of innovative teachers have still not been reached out to and remain to be identified. An Online Discussion Forum was started to encourage peer-based learning amongst teachers. On this forum, cases of teachers were put up for discussion to add value to the existing innovation as well as to help teachers think about ways to implement these innovations in their schools. The Discussion Forum received

more some participation, in that, various teachers visited the Forum. How teachers can add more value through their comments is an issue that will be taken up soon.

Lastly, selected cases identified through this year's process will be compiled into a book, which can serve as supplementary instructional material in teacher training colleges and can also be integrated into the in-service trainings conducted by the DIET. The identified innovative teachers will serve as mentors for other teachers in terms of guiding them to create and implement innovative methodologies to solve different problems and to arrive at solutions that have a positive impact on the learning outcomes of the students.

Results and Discussion:

Innovation fairs for innovative teachers:

The detail of innovation fairs for innovative teachers during 2018-19 to 2019-2020 has been given in the table below:

Table-1: Innovative teachers in Vadodara/chhotaudepur

Year	No of fair	Districts		Total No. of teachers participated
		Vadodara	Chhotaudepur	
		No. of teachers participated	No. of teachers participated	
2018-2019	02	48	24	72
2019-2020	02	46	29	75
	Total	94	53	147

The above table no. 1 indicates that total 147 innovative teachers from the district Vadodara and Chhotaudepur were identified and displayed their innovation in the fair. The visiting teachers were disseminated about it.

Table-2: Areas of innovations displayed

Sr. No.	Areas of innovations	Total no. of innovations	Percentage (%)
1.	Computer based teaching	8	5.44
2.	Activity based Mathematics teaching	18	12.24
3.	Environmental education	18	12.24
4.	Language learning	11	7.48
5.	Value education	7	4.76
6.	Personality development	17	11.56

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7.	Art & Craft	3	2.04
8.	English teaching through game	12	8.16
9.	Inclusion in education (CWSN)	8	5.44
10.	Effective community participation	7	4.76
11.	Activity based Science teaching	14	9.52
12.	Self-learning through wall painting	11	7.48
13.	Girls education	4	2.72
14.	Curriculum beyond the classroom	9	6.12
	Total:	147	

Detail given in the table no.-2 indicates that the displayed innovative practices were based on 14 different areas. It can be revealed that majority of the selected area by the teachers for the innovations are very much related to the quality concern at school level. It may be assumed there might have been a positive impact on the quality of education of these innovations. But it's a matter of further investigation that how far these innovations proved to be effective in achieving the desirable goal of improving learning outcomes of students?

Innovative teachers: Response analysis:

Opinions of Innovative teachers with respect to...	Major outcomes emerged from the responses
Innovations have been carried out and practiced	Teaching should be activity oriented and examples should be related to real life experiences. It should involve lot of interaction with the learners. This kind of teaching methodology would keep the learner motivated and inspired. Lessons must be prepared with a learner friendly style and in the simplest mode and must be related to real life. It should be ensured that skills get developed through the lessons. The method of rote learning must be avoided. A teacher's alertness, interest taken, will keep his/her class also alert & motivated. The innovative teachers have introduced various innovative practices such as concept based teaching learning classes, connecting education with real life by skill based activities and project, making a very friendly environment in which students love to come to the

	<p>school, while developing curriculum, teaching learning process should be made more easy which could be grasped by the students, promoting collaborative teaching, Organizing Special Assembly so as to provide same platform to students and parents, so the students can show their talents in front of their parents and parents may also give feedback about the school so that further improvement may be brought.</p>
<p>Approaches of teaching have been followed</p>	<p>The learners of all kinds have a tremendous energy; so the teachers have to be equally tactful and efficient to handle them. This may be possible if a teacher understands them thoroughly and update their skills. The awardees teachers have always preferred their own teaching-learning process based on interactive and discussion methodologies. The concepts are explained in a very easy and simple language that; a learner could understand easily. They have emphasized on activity oriented teaching methodology and these activities were related to real life experiences of learners therefore, learners have always showed keen interest in teaching learning process.</p>
<p>Working towards the all-round development of the learners</p>	<p>Is observable by the way these teachers have managed and tackled the different kinds of learners in the classrooms, the kind of teaching strategies they have adopted to deal with the disruptive learners, the kind of evaluation strategies that they have evolved over these years in order to help the learners gain the maximum. As mentioned earlier interactive, real life experience based as well as activity oriented teaching strategies have been adopted. A teacher has to manage all kinds of learners which is possible only when the teachers deliver his best both inside as well as outside the classroom; inside the classroom by delivering the maximum knowledge to students and</p>

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	outside the classroom by constantly supporting and guiding them. The teacher's role is to produce useful citizens not merely machines.
Community partnership	Teachers were found to be quite socially active as well. They have been involved in organizing various social projects at mass level like -Each One Teach one to raise the literacy levels; my earth my duty and cleanliness rally to increase and promote awareness about environment. It clearly shows about his keen interests and desires to work towards the up-liftmen of the students towards the betterment of the society and to create better as well as socially active citizens of this country.
Future academic plans	Training and workshops are the tools through which one can keep himself updated. These workshops provide an individual with the opportunities to interact with their professional counter parts. One learns from them and one also learns from their mistakes. A teacher also learns from learners. Internet; nowadays, gives ample opportunity to learn. Recognition at state level as innovators has made these innovative teachers more responsible and at the same time more conscious towards their duties and responsibilities.

Conclusion:

It is concluded on the basis of the above responses that educational innovations is an effective tool for enhancing the quality of education at school level. Not only has this it also facilitated the groups of teachers dealing with the similar kind of problems. The innovative teachers must always try to rise as high as possible in their career since their professional development is directly linked with the extent of output such excelling teachers can give to the teaching learning process.

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