



Learner centric innovative teaching and evaluation practices: a pathway to sustain quality

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Abstract

The recent times has been observing a process of innovation and restructuring in higher education. A change in the teaching-learning practices and evaluation of student outcome is of prime importance for new strategies to be developed. This research is conducted for finding out innovative teaching practices adopted by the teachers at higher education institutions for attainment of expected learning outcomes and sustain quality of higher education. This study also aims at proposing such innovative practices for inclusion in NAAC framework making it result oriented framework.

Keywords: NAAC, Innovative practices, higher education institutions, teacher education.

Introduction

The demand for reliable quality higher education is growing enormously and the main purpose of higher education is to produce intellects by offering quality education of global standards¹. The quality teaching has become a challenge as the education systems are witnessing rapid and continuous changes to make the education learner centric to achieve better results². The advancement in the technologies have change the nature of teacher student interactions, teaching methodologies and varied evaluation techniques³. Higher education institutions needs to be ready to adopt to these changes in order to sustain the quality and fulfils the expectations of the learners⁴.

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has been assigned with the responsibility of quality assessment, accreditation and enactment evaluation of universities and higher education institutions in the country⁵. Its main aim is to bring in innovative practices in the education system for the holistic development of the learners⁶. With the globalisation of education, education system needs to evolve the quality parameters to compete with the world's best higher education institutions. This study is to conduct a scrutiny of the existing Teaching, learning and evaluation in Higher Education Institutions and to recommend remedial actions to bring innovations in the current practices to meet the challenges ahead.

In order to enhance the quality, it is necessary for the higher education institutions to confirm that the education they offer match the expectations of the students and the industry requirements⁷. To achieve this Higher Educational Institutions require to bring innovative practices which supports in improving the quality of processes mainly teaching, learning

and evaluation. Innovative teaching practices aids teachers fostering learning outcomes and delivering quality education to the learners.

A survey is conducted by the researcher to find out the views of the teachers teaching at higher education institutions on innovation and reforms to be brought within the structure of current higher education that reflects ways of evaluating students significantly different from traditional methods.

Importance and need of the study: The existing Teaching-Learning policies have not delivered the expected outcome as projected. The overall academic outcome and the results of most of the higher education institutions are not promising. It has become need of an hour that our policy makers, educationists and teaching regulatory authorities have to do critical analysis of the existing teaching learning and evaluation systems and bring innovations in order to achieve the expected goal instead of being mere followers.

These innovative practices needs to form the part of accreditation framework to ensure the quality outcome of the programmes and enhance the quality of higher education system.

Many students raised their concern regarding the type of assessments they undergo which do not usually measure their actual learning and the assessments they take is not relevant to the actual work. The teacher plays a vital role in facilitating the learning and encouraging students to improve their learning with the use of innovative practices promoting the interest levels of the students related to the subject. The teaching methodologies should give ample chance to learn through collaborative and participatory learning modes.

Improving student learning and developing problem-solving skills among the learners through innovations in teaching learning and evaluation is a global cause of concern currently. The graduates of higher education institutions are expected to be trained to solve the problems at workplace effectively and efficiently. Teaching methodology should be based on this aspect which trained the students to assimilate their knowledge and perform based on the same in their respective fields.

This study is most of the eminent colleges the blended teaching learning approach is absorbed to disseminate knowledge. Apart from the traditional lecture method, the teachers have adopted learner-centred teaching methodologies like workshops, quiz, seminars, group discussions, audio-visual clips, industry visits and lectures by experts. Mentors, remedial classes etc are introduced in most of the colleges as a support systems to guide the students weak in particular subjects.

Literature Review: According to Prensky (2005), the existing teaching methods are obsolete. However recent time has witnessed reforms and innovations in teaching learning processes at higher education institution. This poses a challenge to the teachers teaching at higher education to get themselves trained and adopt to the new trends⁸.

Lopez (2014) states that to bring innovation in teaching processes “a change in educational proposals that break with the linearity of the classic teaching-learning processes and a break with the hierarchical model of knowledge transmission” are essential. This indicates the need of flexible teaching-learning approach to be implemented in higher education⁹.

Lister and College (2015) emphasis on the use of new technology tools in the teaching methods to serve the current generation who is tech-savvy and more focused. In order to enhance the student participation and learning outcome the teaching and evaluation methods need to be designed and developed with a clear focus on students learning outcome¹⁰.

Doley (2014) scrutinised the “Role of Assessment in Improving Quality in Higher Education”. The analysis of the data states that innovative teaching and evaluation techniques helps in quality enhancement in learning of skill based subjects and imparting knowledge. The study advises that the educationists, teachers and trainers should develop and adopt the systematic and efficient assessment procedure for the improvement of quality of higher education¹¹.

Adam (2004) claims learning outcomes certifies the students achievement resulting better credentials and an improved student experience¹².

Wolf, K., & Goodwin, L. (2007) in their research titled “Evaluating and Enhancing Outcomes Assessment Quality in Higher Education Programs” throws the light on the significant feature of the accreditation system is the “outcome assessment”

which is a mark of attainment of standards set by the assessment and accreditation council. This study particularly focuses on assessment of quality of institution’s outcomes evaluation and its relation with the evaluation of student assessment system. This concludes that, the quality is directly associated with the student outcome which is dependent on the innovative practices in teaching and evaluation of the students¹³.

Yadava (2011) in his research article titled “Reforming Higher Education: Addressing Quality Concern” scrutinised the various processes and activities of higher educational institutions to warn out out-dated processes and develop new processes. The findings of the study states that incremental change from the traditional processes to performance based activities is essential to achieve quality in higher education¹⁴.

The above research studies highlights the need for adopting innovations in teaching, learning and evaluation processes which are to be designed and developed with learner centric approach to enhance and sustain quality in higher education¹⁵. The globalisation and borderless education has also changed the operations at various higher education institutions to cope up with the future challenges.

The objectives of the study are: i. To study the current teaching learning and evaluation methods, ii. To find out the need of innovative teaching learning and evaluation techniques focusing learning outcome, iii. To suggest the innovative practices for inclusion in the NAAC framework making it more effective and result oriented. To achieve these objectives the research is being designed as presented in next section.

Methodology

A survey method is used for the collection of the data for the research. Self-designed questionnaire was validated from two experts and was modified as per their suggestions. The questionnaire contains both quantitative and qualitative questions hence mixed research method is adopted in the present study. The teachers at higher education institutions in Pune formed the universe for the study. Teachers teaching at one of the eminent deemed university at Pune were selected as respondents and a sample of 52 was collected. The questionnaire were sent to the respondents through Google forms and the data was collected through personal administration in some cases. Stratified Random Sampling method is adopted.

Data Analysis: The data collected through self-designed questionnaire was entered in SPSS and quantitative questions are analyzed through it. Two open ended qualitative questions were analyzed manually using thematic content analysis. The Responses were first visited to get understanding and data familiarity. In the second phase the themes and sub-themes are looked for and were identified. The results for both quantitative and qualitative analysis are presented in this section.

Quantitative Analysis: i. Respondents were asked that if they think traditional evaluation processes measure the knowledge and skills acquired at various levels of the programmes and 58 percent feel that traditional methods are not suitable. This is represented in Figure-1. ii. Respondents were asked that if they think there is a need to bring reforms in the traditional teaching learning methodologies to make it more efficient and effective. The Figure-2 shows that 85 percent feel that there is a need for the same. iii. There is reflection of innovative teaching practices on student performance and learning outcome. It can be analyzed that number one and two represents the agreement and agreement is there on this (Figure-3). iv. Respondents were asked that about Innovations in teaching and evaluation helps in catering the different teaching and learning requirements of students with diverse learning abilities and background. It can be analyzed that number one and two represents the agreement and agreement is there on this.

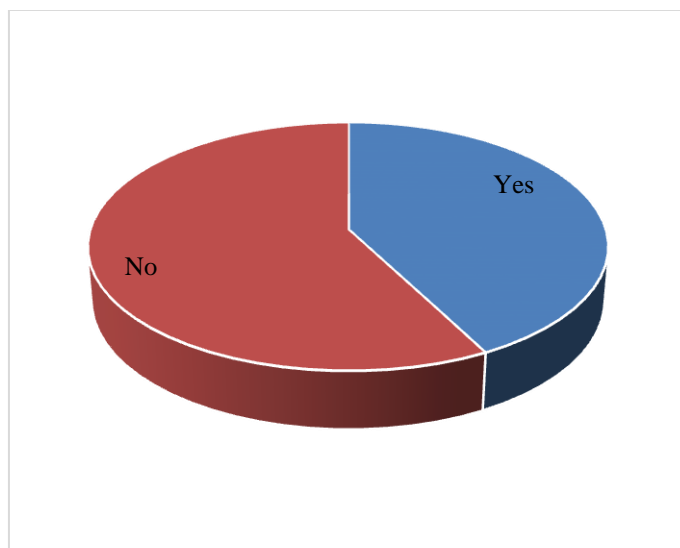


Figure-1: Traditional methods process.

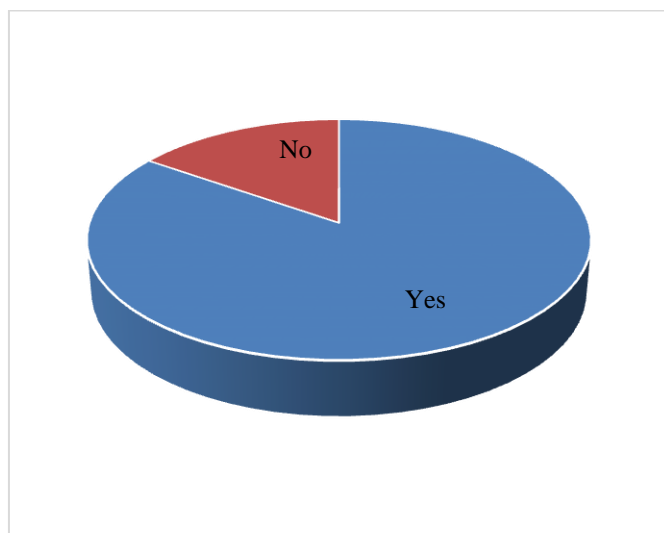


Figure-2: Need of reforms.

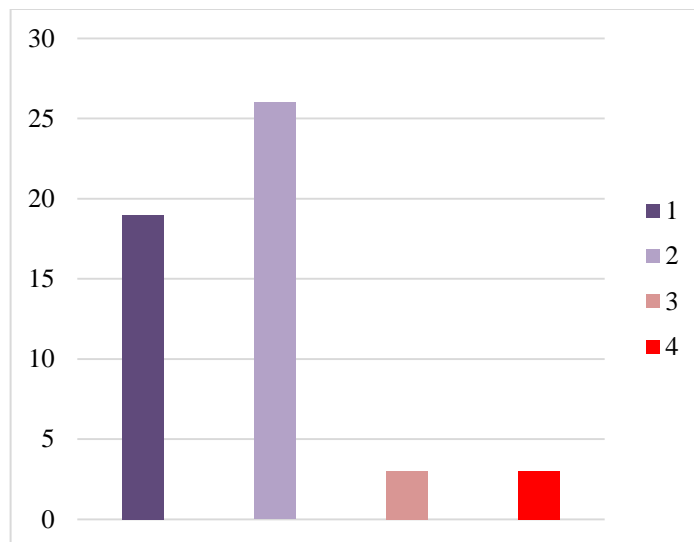


Figure-3: Innovative teaching and student performance.

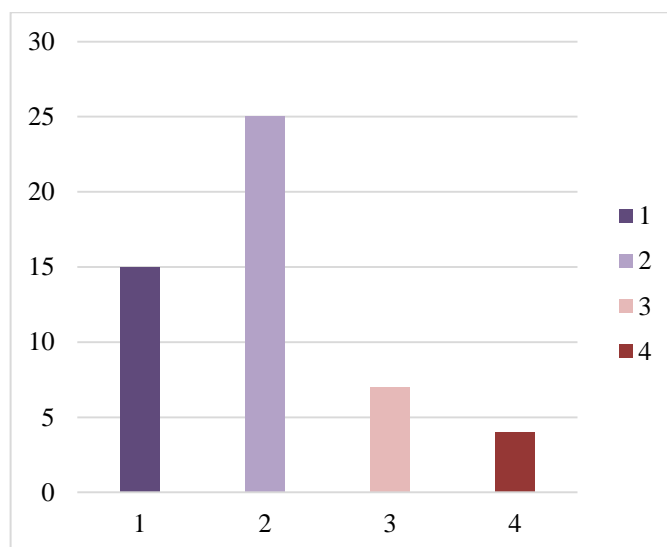


Figure-4: Teaching learning requirements.

Qualitative analysis: The responses of two open ended questions are summarized here. Respondents have adopted various innovative practices in the teaching to make it more efficient and effective. These are presented in Table-1. The various innovative evaluation methods adopted or developed recently are presented in Table-2.

Results and discussions

The data analysis of the study shows that there is a need to reform the traditional teaching learning processes and need to make them technology orientated. Teachers need to be trained to adopt these technologies in their teaching methodologies in order to make the teaching learner centric to improve student performance and learning outcome. The study proves innovation in teaching learning methods facilitates catering diverse needs of students coming from diverse background.

Table-1: Innovative practices in teaching.

S.No	Innovative Teaching Practice
1	Using of tool wherever possible
2	Blended learning, Virtual classrooms including short surveys during lectures
3	Role play (Collaborative working with agility)
4	Project based learning
5	Experiential Learning
6	Think Pair Share
7	Muddy Point
8	Brain Storming
9	Group Discussion
10	Collaborative learning
11	Problem based Learning
12	Flipped classroom
13	Use Technology to Collaborate and Share Knowledge
14	Use of Active Teaching Learning strategies
15	Review paper based assignment
16	Introduced students to the recent trends
17	Research paper discussion, Swayam and NPTEL
18	Field based studies for explaining Scientific processes

Table-2: Innovative evaluation methods.

S.No	Innovative evaluation method
1	Open resource test
2	Conducting online quizzes
3	Traceability in the various activities performed by the students.
4	Team assignments
5	Team evaluation using various quotients.
6	Think pair share
7	case based learning
8	Designing Case Studies for flipped classroom
9	Jigsaw Classroom
10	Peer Evaluation
11	Brain storming
12	Jurisprudential Inquiry Model

Limitations and Future Scope: A study is limited to the teachers teaching at the higher education institutions at the eminent deemed university of Pune. The study focuses mainly on the need of innovative practices in teaching and evaluation methodologies at higher education institutions and its impact on improving the quality of higher education. There is a future scope for the study analysing the existing assessment and accreditation framework of teacher education institution to suggest additional parameters evaluating the teacher trainings, selection procedure of teachers etc. to enhance the quality outcome of teacher education institutions as quality teachers is the key to the problems at hand.

Conclusion

The globalisation and the rapid changes in the technology have posed a challenge to the educationists and policy makers to meet the changing needs and requirements of the students. The students should be trained in such a way that they can be ready to face the challenges and the changing needs of the industry. In order to develop the problem solving ability of the learners, innovative methods of teaching and evaluation should be adopted by the teachers. Mere use of technology and innovative practices in teaching and evaluation is not sufficient, the teachers need to be trained to make it more effective. The vital role of a teacher with technology in hands can lead to quality education and have the command to transform the social order. An innovative educator disseminate the knowledge and skill sets to the students making them ready for the future roles. The data collected through the survey emphasis the need of innovative practices in teaching and evaluation to ensure the quality outcome of higher education institution. The learner centric result oriented teaching and evaluation methodologies need be included in the accreditation and assessment framework of higher education institution making them more effective and efficient.

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