Chapter 6
Effective Learning Through Moodle Management, Social Media, and Peer–Guided Learning
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ABSTRACT

The old method of teacher-centric learning has been criticized as a less effective method of teaching and learning. Academics have been implementing newer and better initiatives that are more student-centric, which has proven to be more meaningful and effective in delivering the knowledge needed for students to grow and obtain the necessary skills to be future leaders. However, through self-observation and feedback from students, the author noticed that some subjects are still using the old methods in delivering the subject to the students. The problem statement here is that there are still subjects taught today that are teacher-centric, which might not be suitable to develop students as future leaders. The author argues that a good educator should focus in creating a healthy self-guided learning environment. Several initiatives were made by the author to change the way of teaching and learning. By analyzing the previous performance and gathering students’ feedback, the outcome of the initiatives has been successful in ensuring students have better learning experiences.

INTRODUCTION

The human’s ability to learn has constantly gained attention, debates and scientific inquiries for thousands of years. Understanding the learning ability is crucial in order for us to improve our teaching and learning structures. Proper teaching and learning methods can significantly ensure that the learning process is enjoyable, effective and efficient while avoiding frustrations and waste of resources.

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Teaching and learning are two different yet interdependent concepts. Teaching can be defined as “any manner of imparting information or skill so that others may learn” (Merriam-webster.com, 2016) whereas learning can be defined as “to gain knowledge or understanding of or skill in by study, instruction, or experience” (Merriam-webster.com, 2016). Kolb (1984, p.38) describe learning as “process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience”. The ultimate goal in teaching is to facilitate learning in other people whereas the ultimate goal in learning is to gain knowledge and understanding of something.

Teaching and learning methods have evolved throughout these years. Teaching and learning can and should be customized to best fit its targeted students in a manner whereby learning can be enjoyable and life-long process. However, despite this common knowledge, some educators are still using the old method of teaching and learning which might not be that effective in delivering the knowledge.

As the population has shifted from Baby Boomers to Millennials Generation, there has been a shift in teaching and learning throughout these years to accommodate different generations. Previous traditional teacher-centric (also known as conventional method) is seen as less productive and less effective in educating this new generation. The new student-centric (also known as constructivist method) focuses in ensuring that students can learn anywhere, anytime through online or offline with support of wide access to resources that are pre-designed and updated from time to time. One of the ways to achieve this is by having a proper Moodle management and the usage of social media. The main objective of this book chapter is to share some very simple yet effective techniques in educating students. We will also have a brief discussion on how attitude can positively affect good teaching and learning experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various learning theories have provided different perspectives and strategies to promote effective learning. The five most well-known learning theories are behaviorism, cognitivism, social cognitivism, humanism and constructivism. Behaviorism was considered as the work of Edward Thorndike (1913) and Ivan Pavlov (1927) and was among the earliest theory that tries to explain the learning process. Behaviorism sees learning as a process of acquiring new behavior and that learning is a result of environmental conditions also known as stimuli and reinforcement. There are three main assumptions for this theory which are learning is shown and can be measured by the change of behavior; behavior are main shaped by environment; and reinforcement are core to explain the learning process (Shlechter 1991; Watson 1997). Skinner (1958, p.972) argued that “behavior is shown to be shaped and maintained by its ‘reinforcing’ consequences rather than elicited as conditioned or unconditioned responses to stimuli”. His arguments and findings were later widely adopted and implemented into many educational practices. Behaviorism lays the foundation to what is currently known as the teacher-centric approach.

Cognitive theory proposed that learning is not just dependent on the stimulus provided but rather it is a result of mental operations or processing (Moore & Fitz, 1993). There are two main assumptions under this theory; first; our memory system acts the processor of information which actively receive and organize information; and secondly; prior knowledge is crucial in order to learn (Merriam & Caffarella; 1999). During the learning process, one would receive the information, store and retrieve it when needed thus learning process is achieved. An effective learning process requires the learners to be able to receive, make sense of the information and process the information efficiently. This theory focuses on the learner rather than the stimulus or environment. Therefore, in higher institutions settings, students would need