Effective Teaching Methods at Higher Education Level

Poonam Rani

Assistant Professor, Chandigarh college of Education, landran, Mohali,

ABSTRACT

The goal of this research was to assess the efficacy of various teaching strategies for graduate students. The University of Karachi's Faculty of Arts conducted interviews with 230 undergraduate students to learn more about their opinions about the finest and most productive teaching techniques as well as the factors that contributed to such opinions. The majority of the students thought the lecture style was the most effective. The teacher delivers all information on the subject, time is saved, pupils pay close attention to the lecture and take notes, among other things. The group discussion approach was recognized as the second-best teaching strategy for a variety of reasons, including more student engagement, more effective learning, a reduction in the need for memorization, the development of student creativity, etc. Students' opinions and evaluations on engaging and efficient teaching strategies can be used to recommend changes to the teaching and learning process.

I.   INTRODUCTION:

The two facets of education are teaching and learning. The quantity of pupil learning that takes place is the most widely acknowledged metric for determining excellent teaching. The "amount learnt" in the course & the students' overall opinions on the teacher & the course have historically had strong links. Those who retained more information rated their professors better (Cohen, 1981; Theall & Franklin, 2001). The success of a teacher again depends on how well their students learn.

There is a wealth of well-researched methods for teachers to offer material and skills that can improve students' learning prospects. It also contains plenty of advice on what to avoid doing in the classroom. There is no set formula for what teaching strategies work best with specific abilities or subject, though. Students sometimes lack the knowledge to determine if a particular

instructor's technique of choice was the finest teaching approach, merely "a method," or just the technique with which the educator was most familiar. Doyle.T. (n.d).

The clearest support for the validity of student evaluations comes from a meta-analysis of 41 research papers that looked at the connection between student learning and ratings. According to research on student evaluations of instruction, student evaluations are often valid, trustworthy, and generally unbiased (Murray, 1994).

The majority of institutions support a procedure whereby students offer anonymous feedback after finishing each course they take. Since they were first used in the middle of the 1920s, these assessments of instructor effectiveness have been a hot issue (Chang, 2001), and they provide a huge difficulty for almost every institution that employs them (Hoyt & Pallett, 1999). The way that students evaluate professors has changed dramatically over time, particularly in terms of approach and goal. They have evolved from being primarily utilized to aid students in course selection to aiding professors in honing their teaching techniques and aiding administrators in making personnel choices (Ory, 2000).

Today, suggestions for faculty development and personnel choices are frequently based on student evaluations of education (Scriven, 1995). Administrators use the data from ratings to help them make summative and formative decisions about recruiting, choosing faculty for teaching awards and accolades, promoting and retaining faculty, and assigning instructors to courses (Franklin, 2001; Kulik, 2001). Braskamp (2000) advises teachers to grow and enhance their teaching effectiveness by formatively using the data. In fact, student evaluations are the most widely utilized method for assessing teachers and courses in over 90% of all colleges & universities in the United States (Cuseo, n.d.).

Whether or whether students are fair assessors of a teacher's success has been the subject of several studies. Although there are many

exceptions, in general, it is believed that students are trustworthy and logical providers of information (Arreola, 1995; Braskamp&Ory, 1994; Pratt, 1997), Students participate in a variety of educational activities in class (instructional materials and aids, exams, lectures,readings). They can judge quality, relevance, utility, and instructor-student interactions since they are essentially experimental consumers (Montgomery, n.d.). Braskamp&Ory (1994) assert that students may simply supply information with regard to teaching, however Cuseo (n.d.) asserts that students can evaluate what is taught and the way it is taught.The easiest way to put it is by quoting Ory (2001, p. 12), who says that "although they haven't been to class, as customers they have a genuine voice." According to Theall, M. (n.d.), students are able to respond to inquiries on the calibre of lectures, the importance of readings & assignments, and the precision of the teacher's explanations. The ability to communicate happiness or discontent with the experience rests with the students. In any event, they have the right to share their ideas, and nobody else has the authority to evaluate whether or not the experience was fruitful, instructive, rewarding, or valuable.

II. METHODOLOGY

ElevendepartmentswereselectedthroughpurposivesamplingfromtheFacultyof Arts, University of Karachi, including department of ; Special Education, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Mass Communication, Education, International Relations, English, Urdu, Persian,and Islamiclearning. Twenty students studying at graduatelevel from each department were selected through convenient sampling to seek their opinionabout the most effective teaching methods (as perceived by them) used by their teachers,and the reasons for highly rating a particular teaching method. Total two hundred andtwenty students were interviewed. They were asked to rate different methods of teachingused by their teachers on a

scale of 1- 5, one being the least important and 5 being themost important teaching method. The results of the study were compiled and analyzed bypercentage method.

Objective
- Identify the various teaching strategies employed by university instructors to instruct graduate students in various faculties of the arts.
- To learn what the students think about the teaching strategy they think is the most engaging and effective.
- To determine why a certain teaching strategy is regarded as the most engaging and effective one.
- To offer recommendations for enhancing teaching quality in light of student perception and rating use.

III. FINDINGS

The majority of the students thought the lecture style was the most effective. Among the reasons are that the teacher delivers all information on the subject, it is a time-saving technique, and the students pay close attention to the lecture and take notes. The group discussion approach was recognised as the second-best teaching strategy for a variety of reasons, including more student engagement, more effective learning, a reduction in the need for memorization, the development of student creativity, etc. Students' opinions and evaluations on engaging and effective teaching strategies can be used to recommend changes to the teaching and learning process.

1) Rating of various teaching methods:
The teaching technique was rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least fascinating & 5 being the most intriguing, as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Teaching methods	Rating										No of students
	1		2		3		4		5		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Lecture	34	16%	18	08%	00	00%	80	36%	88	40%	220
Groupdiscussion	34	16%	18	08%	54	24%	34	16%	80	36%	220
Individual presentation	53	24%	44	20%	26	12%	53	24%	44	20%	220

Assignments	18	08%	53	24%	89	40%	34	16%	26	12%	220
Seminars	52	22%	54	25%	34	16%	54	25%	26	12%	220
Workshop	25	11%	54	25%	53	24%	53	24%	35	16%	220
Conferences	26	12%	53	24%	53	24%	35	16%	53	24%	220
Brainstorming	27	12%	34	16%	54	25%	80	36%	25	11%	220
Roleplay	25	11%	54	25%	27	12%	80	36%	34	16%	220
Casestudy	34	16%	27	12%	53	24%	52	23%	54	25%	220

2) Reasons for rating various teaching methods as interesting best teaching methods:

A) Lecture Method
a. It produces fresh thoughts.
b. It works well in big classes.
c. The teacher is knowledgeable and skilled in the topic; she can clearly explain all points & respond to all queries posed by the pupils.
d. If a student needs further explanation, they can ask.
e. Acquire knowledge via hearing
f. The teacher clarifies every point.
g. Students contribute their ideas
h. The teacher explains the entire subject to the class in simple terms so that the pupils may readily comprehend the subject.
i. It works well in big classes.
j. The teacher imparts all subject-related knowledge.
k. Saving time since the lecture should be finished on time by the teacher.
l. After the lecture, the students share their opinions.
m. If a student is having trouble understanding the lecture, they can ask questions.
n. As the teacher asks questions at the conclusion of the lecture, the students pay close attention and take notes.
o. Students are aware of and comprehend fundamental ideas.
p. It produces fresh thoughts.
q. The teacher is familiar with all of the pupils and can utilise effective teaching techniques to help the group comprehend.
r. The teacher is knowledgeable, competent, and capable of responding to any student inquiries.
s. Teachers exchange knowledge with their charges to pique their interest.
t. When the teacher poses a question, the students become more engaged and active.
u. The instructor gives notes.
v. Every point is well understood by students.
w. Students and teachers exchange knowledge.
x. A teacher serves as an example for students.

B) Group discussion
• A rise in student involvement.
• Students voice their opinions while also listening to others.
• Go through the discussion points that were overlooked with the teachers.
• Students discover crucial information and study on their own.
• Students converse about concepts.
• Students hear from everyone, not just the people who always talk.
• When students offer their ideas after a discussion, the teacher corrects any errors.
• Learners may create their own notes.
• The education is more efficient.
• It encourages kids to think and fosters creativity, so they are not forced to learn by rote.
• Students get enough time to prepare their topics.
• Before discussion, students should be prepared with readings and information. Suggestion
• Only pupils who are confident participate; the others abstain.
• After debate, concepts become evident.
• Each student expresses their viewpoint.

C)   Individual Presentation
• Before presenting a presentation, students must fully comprehend the subject; this is known as topic mastery.
• It boosts kids' self-assurance.
• Beneficial learning experience for the lone student who is presenting.
• It's crucial for teachers to supervise students while they browse through many books to get information.

D) Assignment
The pupils' capacity to investigate any topic from a variety of books, online, and other sources, is improved.

E)   Seminars
- Offer the chance to interact with others in the same profession.
- Encourage student participation in their education.
- Interested approach.

F)   Conference
- Providing an opportunity to connect with others in the same profession.
- Networking with other organisations and professions.

G)   Brain storming
- More knowledge is gained, learning is effective, students participate more, students voice their opinions, learning is active, and creative thinking is fostered.
- Students think creatively and critically.
- Everyone has the opportunity to voice their opinions.
- Simple subjects may be learned from several perspectives.

H)   Role Play
- Interesting approach
- The use of creativity is encouraged.
- Students think creatively and critically.
- The setting appeals to the students
- Active learning and simple learning

I)   Case Study
- Creative thinking is encouraged.
- Active learning.
- Students think creatively and critically.

IV.   DISCUSSION

Making various methods of teaching more interesting

For the sake of their students' learning, professors in higher education work to enhance their teaching skills. Many of them look into new teaching strategies. Different teaching strategies are employed in the classroom depending on the type of material being covered, the number of pupils, and the resources that are available. Various approaches are described here, along with some pointers and suggestions for making them better. (S. Sajjad, 1997)

Lecture Method: A lecture is a discourse or oral presentation made to a group of people by a lecturer, trainer, or speaker. Despite the development of computer technology and training systems, the lecture style remains a mainstay of instruction at the higher levels of education. This approach is cost-effective, can accommodate a significant number of students, allows for the systematic coverage of information, and gives the instructor excellent time and material management.

According to Sullivan & McIntosh (1996), the lecture may be a very successful and participatory approach for imparting knowledge to students with careful organisation and efficient presenting strategies. The lecture instructs the students on listening and taking notes quickly. (2000, Kochhar, p. 345)

Technique for improving lecture method
- ✓ Lecture content ought to be thought-provoking and stimulating.
- ✓ To make information remember, it should be presented vividly utilising examples.
- ✓ To engage students in the learning process and to assess their understanding, the teacher should ask questions often during the presentation.
- ✓ Use visual aids to reinforce learning, such as flip charts, whiteboards, and transparencies.
- ✓ The lecture technique should be improved by the teacher using student input.

Discussion Method: Group members or a teacher and students engage in a free-flowing verbal discussion. Students should be familiar with the subject matter beforehand in order to have a productive conversation. According to McCarthy, P. (1992), the benefits of class discussion include the pooling of ideas and experiences from the group and the opportunity for active participation by all students. According to Kochhar (2000, p. 347), a topic, an issue, or a scenario in which there is disagreement is appropriate for discussion-based learning.Our study also showed that students rated group discussion as the second best method, citing the following reasons: it has more student participation, the learning is more effective, the students don't have to rely on memorization, every student gives their opinion, and this method fosters creativity in the students.

Technique for improving Discussion method
- ✓ The instructor has to provide the discussion's steps and process enough time to be prepared.
- ✓ The criteria and various facets of the subject should be chosen for the concentrated discussion.
- ✓ Enough time should be allocated to cover all the topics. Students should be aware of the time allotted for coming to a decision at the same time.
- ✓ The instructor should present the subject, the goal of the conversation, and the pupils taking part in it from the outset.
- ✓ Background knowledge about the subject should be given prior to debate.

✓ Questions must be included to give guidance.
✓ To encourage dialogue, a relaxed atmosphere should be provided.

Role Play: When players in a simulation take on various roles, role play happens. These may be strongly specified, such as biographical information, personality traits, attitudes, and beliefs, or they may be just obliquely suggested by a job or function outline. These methods have previously shown that they can be used with a variety of students, subjects, and levels. Singh and Sudarshan (2005), p. 238 and 239. It is an engaging and memorable teaching strategy. The occurrences that are chosen for enactment should be as realistic as the circumstances permit in order to reap the most benefits from this strategy.

Technique for improving Role Play
Prior to the role play, the instructor should inform the participants of the parts they will play, provide them time to prepare, confirm the role play's secrecy, and instruct them to act authentically.
✓ The teacher should choose and inform the observers of their duties.
✓ During the role play, the instructor must remain silent, pay attention, and take notes. If previously agreed, the teacher may offer a time warning. If participation dries up, the teacher should be ready to take some action and can step in as a last resort.
✓ The teacher should use character names rather than participant names when summarising, highlighting key takeaways, and leaving the players with after the role play, asking for feedback from lead participants, taking observations from observers, and asking other participants for remarks.

Case Study
Case method teaching, which was primarily created in commercial and legal contexts, may be effectively applied in the liberal arts, education & engineering. The main goals of this strategy are to help students improve their critical thinking & problem-solving abilities while also exposing them to real-world scenarios. The pupils are asked to do one of two things after being given a set of conditions that are either based on a real incident or made up. and to:
1. to identify issues and offer solutions (s).
2. After presenting the issue and the remedy, to explain the actions' repercussions.
It takes a lot of time, and occasionally the case doesn't truly provide you any practical experience.

It might not be conclusive, and incomplete data might provide inaccurate findings. The kids want to know the teacher's correct response at the conclusion. When doing a case study, the teacher's responsibilities should include:
✓ Reading the case to identify the main issues the decision maker is facing,
✓ Determine the information needed for issue analysis and solution synthesis, generate, evaluate, and compare potential solutions, and suggest a course of action.

Technique for improving case study method
✓ Cases should be succinct, well-written, reflect actual problems, and be open to a range of opposing opinions.
✓ To create a written report or a formal presentation of the case, students should collaborate in groups.
Brainstorming: It is a loosely organised type of debate that encourages idea generation without getting participants caught up in pointless analysis. It is a highly helpful method for making decisions, coming up with new solutions, and fostering teamwork. It improves listening abilities.

Technique for improving brainstorming method
The following ground principles should be followed while conducting a brainstorming session:
✓ There should be no criticism, and crazy ideas should be encouraged & documented without judgement.
✓ The number of ideas, not their quality, should be the focus.
✓ Equal involvement from all members is required.
✓ It may get disorganised, therefore the instructor has to know how to manage the conversation and facilitate the concerns.
Assignment method: Written assignments aid in the structuring of information, absorption of data, and improved test preparation. It places a strong emphasis on students' individual work and methods that support both teaching & learning processes (Kochhar, 2000, p.358).

Technique for improving assignment method
According to Davis (1993), "Give assignments and tests that respect students' different backgrounds and unique interests." The teacher should outline the specifics of the assignment's topic. As an illustration, a professor offering a course on medical and health education gave students a choice of themes for their term papers, one of which was alternative healing belief

systems. Students were given a task in the social sciences class to compare male-only, female-only, & male-female work groups.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS:

✓ Peer review, self-evaluation, teaching portfolios, student accomplishment, and students' opinions of the teachers' methods of instruction can all be used to gauge the efficacy of teaching.

✓ In order for students to take the rating process seriously, they must be told that the information they provide is appreciated by the faculty and will be utilised to enhance teaching and learning in the course

✓ Teachers must teach their students how to give exact feedback to other students that targets certain areas of their learning experience.

✓ Throughout the semester, teachers must reassure students that the evaluations will be utilised to improve the teaching and learning process and that there would be no danger of student retaliation.

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