

## 43. Innovative Techniques of Teaching in Business and Management Education

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Cut-throat competition is the characteristic feature of present-day business world and organizations have wholeheartedly accepted the fact that in order to survive, they have to rely on the efficient workforce. It is an only human resource that can help an organization to face stiff competition and survive successfully. Employees who are highly knowledgeable, skilled, talented and committed are the best resources for any organization. People holding the key positions as well as the lower level positions need to be efficient enough to face turbulent business conditions and to undergo reorganizations. This calls for reorganizations in the education system as well because educational institutions are the places where the overall development of an individual takes place. These institutions are meant for providing knowledge and developing skills among the individuals. But gone are the days

when a typical one-way lecture method was the only way of teaching the students. This age-old practice can no longer be effective in meeting the objectives of educational institutions. Talking precisely about those institutions where business and management education is imparted, this one-way lecture method has become out-dated. Management education is an applied subject which aims to develop such persons who are ready to take various managerial positions and make application of this knowledge to real-life business situations. Furthermore, the immediacy of decision-making and the dominance of empirically derived concepts make management seemingly well-suited to more applied methods of teaching. Moreover, there is a sufficient variety of teaching methods used by academicians within the discipline to investigate which approaches have delivered significant benefits for the understanding and practice of management like group exercises, experiential teaching methods, business simulations, role-plays, live cases, and virtual learning environments (Jones et al, 2012).

Chopra (2018) stated that the relationship between higher teaching skills and course experiences of students demonstrates the effectiveness of applied learning. Similarly, Filak and Sheldon (2008) observed that self-determined student drive along with teacher autonomy delivers greater satisfaction to students, which leads to widespread learning, better course grades, and higher teacher- course evaluations. Teaching business and management courses effectively requires learning self- sufficiency wherein students can develop a logical path of

problem-solving through preferred self - learning methods. This may lead to the learning insight to 'think global' for students and 'teach local' approach for professors familiarizing students to deal with local management situations (Rothwell, 2008). It, therefore, calls for the adoption of more and more innovative techniques to teaching and some of them are discussed below:

**Mind map Approach:** - Mind mapping can be understood as a graphical method of organizing information visually. Mind maps focus mainly on one word or concept. Here, the main concept is drawn as an image in the centre of a blank page to which other relevant information is added by way of words or images. Hence, mind maps are based on hierarchies and tree structures denoting relationships with a central concept. Mind maps are considered a useful technique in various educational and business situations. Brainstorming which is also similar to mind mapping is also found effective in various business situations.

**Z to A Approach:** -This approach begins with explaining the application part of a particular concept, so as to raise interest among the students regarding the concept itself. In other words, here a particular concept is explained in a practical sense first and then its theoretical meaning is explained to the students. For example, in order to make students understand the concept of workplace stress, they are first told about the impact of stress on employee performance as well as on the organizational performance, then after the term stress is explained. This way they will be able to understand things better. Hence, this approach aims to create a long-lasting memory of the concept.

**Case-based approach:** -This approach was originally developed by Christopher C. Langdell, a Harvard Law Professor. Under this method, a case or written problem is presented to students in the class. The teacher asks them to read the case thoroughly and analyze it from all aspects. They are asked to provide solutions to the given problem which is more or less related to the concepts already taught by the teacher in earlier classes. After analyzing the case, students provide solutions which are discussed in the class. The teacher here plays the most important role by way of helping them reach a common solution. Hence, it is a means of simulating real-life experience in the classroom.

**Flipped classroom:** - Under this approach of teaching, the focus is on learning by students themselves. In other words, the students have the responsibility for learning while as the teacher facilitates their learning process (Aslan &Reigeluth, 2015). Here the students are asked to prepare out of class by way of doing homework or watching videos on an assigned topic. While class time is used for interactive learning among the students. The teacher facilitates learning, guides and provides individual help whenever required.

**Roleplaying approach:** -Under this approach, the students are allowed to practice what they have learned with the aim of enhancing their understanding of different concepts. Here, an artificial situation is constructed in the classroom and two or more students are given different roles to play. The role players are given a description of the situation and the roles they have to

play. After giving sufficient time to prepare themselves, the students are asked to act before the class. This way the students are able to put to practice what they have learned from lectures, textbooks etc.

**Humorous Teaching Approach:** -This approach is based on the lighter side of life which in addition to fostering cordial relations between teachers and students, aims to provide welcome relief while trying to follow a lecture on a complex subject. It is a proven fact both by research and experience that making use of humor in teaching is a very effective tool for both the teacher and student. Humor strengthens the inter-personal relationship, eases stress, makes a course more interesting and if relevant to the subject, may even enhance recall of the material.

## **Conclusions:**

While the above stated innovative approaches to teaching seem to be interesting, these have proved worth in the field of education simultaneously. Various studies have found these innovative approaches as an effective method for understanding new and complex concepts. For example, Cunningham (2005) conducted a study in which it was found that 80% of the science students considered mind mapping method as helpful in understanding complex concepts and ideas. Holland et al (2004) also found positive effects of mind mapping technique on the students of art and design. Similarly, many studies have found Flipped classroom and role play approaches to teaching very

effective in management education. As for instance, O'Flaherty & Phillips (2015) found the approach contributes to the effectiveness of student learning. Similarly, Sajid et al (2016) found the approach replaced the traditional lectures with active student-learning that provided well-balanced critical thinking, and improved information retention. The present study, therefore, emphasizes the importance of these innovative approaches to management education because these approaches can prove effective in developing managerial skills among the management students like interpersonal skills, decision-making skills, conflict resolution skills, leadership skills, and intellectual skills. The sooner these techniques are utilized in business and management education, the sooner the better managers will be evolved.