

Learningan enjoyable experience

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Learning should never be a burden in the minds of students. Learning should be an enjoyable experience - be it in engineering, medicine, law, science, arts, commerce, humanities, languages, or any discipline for that matter.

Knowledge has to be used only as a tool in education so as to make the minds of the students sharper, and to prepare them to face an unknown situation not only in their professional career but also in their personal lives. The focus should not be on the contents of knowledge component, but rather it should be on developing the logical and analytical skills, because the contents and technicalities could be picked up at anytime of need. But the ability to look at the same thing from different angles and subsequently analyzing and coming to a logical conclusion - is the quality one essentially has to develop during the process of learning through education. Ultimately, learning through education should lead to making the people live in society with harmony irrespective of the degree they obtain. This is possible when one is capable of putting oneself into the shoes of others in any given situation or crisis. Preparing the students to be in such a position should be the focus of education.

If the content of knowledge is made mandatory, then the students rely on memorizing the concepts and hence it becomes a huge burden on their minds. It would no more be an experience worth enjoying. And also, if the minds are filled with knowledge then they become narrow minded. The open-mindedness which is the key for an absolute understanding of any situation or a problem, whether it is in a profession or in a personal life, would no more be possible and hence human beings are forced to live with the burden of problems. If the mind is allowed to be free of any thought, then it is ready to

look at a new situation with an open mind - without any bias - and would come out with a feasible solution acceptable to a majority if not to one and all.

The teaching and evaluation components of any course of a given educational programme should revolve around making the learning an enjoyable experience. Teaching should not be monotonous, but it should make the students participative. Teaching is all about giving enough clues and making the student to think and arriving at the point. This builds confidence in the student and reduces the gap between the teacher and the taught, and hence become learning an enjoyable experience. Similarly, the evaluation components are to be designed in such a way that the students need not memorize any knowledge component, but should be able to understand and come out with a logical conclusion for a given situation (either it is a conceptual question or a problem). Group discussions, group tasks, assignments (not the same assignment problem for the entire class, but giving many problems to different group of students – the size of the group should not be more than 3 students in a group), surprise quizzes, etc. make learning a lively experience.

Learning could be made an enjoyable experience for both the students and the teacher, if teacher always remembers that he or she is there only for students. Every action of the teacher should clearly show the concern about the students. Here goes a true story of a Physics professor, who has many academic credentials. He wrote many books, contributed excellent research papers in the Journals of international repute, and produced many PhD students. However, towards the fag end of his teaching career he was not happy and felt guilty about his profession. He confided to one of his close friends (a fellow teacher) about his guilt feeling. He said, ‘as a teacher I have been althrough my career **teaching Physics**, but actually I am supposed to teach **Physics to the students**, and hence I am feeling guilty’. This incident clearly demonstrates how important it is for a teacher to ensure that every student of his/her class has understood everything he taught, rather than teaching for the sake of teaching. Some teachers are so immersed in the subject content, that in the class room they either teach to themselves, or teach the black board, forgetting that there are many students in the class who are present and they are there only to learn. This greatly defeats the purpose of teaching and learning. At the same time, the students also have to be responsible and be a part of the class room teaching by actively participating in the lively discussions and make the learning an enjoyable experience. The relationship between the teacher and the taught does not begin and end in the four walls of the class room. It is much beyond that. A student should feel free to approach a teacher anytime and anywhere. This is the challenge a teacher has to face to create that kind of trust and confidence of the students. It is also important for the teacher to make the students understand the underlying aspects of technical content which could be applied both in profession as well as in personal life. The teacher has to make it very clear what is the outcome of any concept taught in the class and how useful it is not only for professional career but also in personal life.

Both the teacher and the taught are stake holders in making learning an enjoyable experience.

One liner:

Put your heart into what you do (however small or big it is) with honesty, sincerity and truthfulness, the quality of outcome is exceptional - resulting in absolute bliss.