



Constructivism A Learner Centered Approach And Its Role In Higher Education For Effective Students' Engagement

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Abstract- This study aims at describing the impact of the learning theory, constructivism is a learning theory has the principle of learner centered where it contributes to the effective involvement of the student which enhance the learners actively build their own understanding and knowledge, rather than passively receiving information. It highlights that rather than merely taking in information, people construct meaning by engaging with their past experiences and knowledge. This notion has a big impact on how teachers create lessons and how students interact with the content. Constructivist ideas hold that students are in charge of and govern their own educational journeys. It is required of teachers to enable their students to grow and to assist them in developing their own unique knowledge and understanding. According to constructivism, which is both a learning theory and an educational philosophy, students actively construct their knowledge via interactions and experiences. Education should emphasize critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which encourage students to make connections between new and existing knowledge. It places a strong emphasis on student-centered learning, in which instructors' mentor rather than instruct, encouraging in-depth comprehension and practical application.

Keywords- Constructivism, Philosophy, Learning Theory, Student-Centered, Student Engagement.

I. Introduction

In higher education, constructivism is a paradigm of learning that stresses that rather than passively absorbing information, students actively create their own knowledge and understanding via their experiences and interactions with the outside world. It sees learning as an active process in which people make meaning of new information and concepts by drawing on their past experiences and knowledge. Constructivist ideas hold that students are in charge of and govern their own educational journeys. It is required of teachers to enable their students to grow and to assist them in developing their own unique knowledge and understanding. One of the major concepts in education is constructivism. It has far-reaching effects on how educators teach and learn to teach. Students must be the center of our efforts if we are to successfully improve education for everybody. Perhaps constructivism's greatest significant



contribution to date has been its emphasis on student-centered learning. As a result, constructivism learning theory is covered in this article as a teaching and learning paradigm. Constructivism is a psychological learning theory that describes how humans may learn and gain information. As such, it directly relates to education. According to the thesis, people use their experiences to create meaning and knowledge. The theory's conceptual grasp and the fundamentals of constructivist learning environments were covered. (Dr. BADA 2015)

Constructivism: Constructivism is the theory that says learners construct knowledge rather than just passively take in information. As people experience the world and reflect upon those experiences, they build their own representations and incorporate new information into their pre-existing knowledge (schemas).

Leaner Centered Approach: Instead of concentrating only on the teacher's content delivery, a learner-centered approach to education aims to customize teaching strategies to each student's requirements, preferences, and learning preferences. In order to create a dynamic learning environment where students are empowered to take charge of their education, it places a strong emphasis on active student participation, collaboration, and reflection. The degree of interest, commitment, and bond that students have with their academic experience, their school, and their peers is referred to as student engagement in higher education. It includes students' active engagement in academic and social activities, their emotional reactions to the learning environment, and their cognitive investment in learning. Academic achievement, retention, and general satisfaction with the higher education experience all depend on effective student engagement.

II. Factors Contributing Student Engagement

There are three techniques to show that students are engaged. Universities would be wise to strive for a positive balance of these three engagement types in order to attain the best results:

Behavioral Engagement: This kind of engagement is shown by students who are actively involved in every facet of campus life. They participate enthusiastically in class, submit work on time, and take part in the many extracurricular activities the school offers. **Emotional Engagement:** These students will gladly show their associations and have strong personal links to their alma mater. Proactive relationships with their teachers and increased interest in their classrooms are manifestations of this involvement.

Cognitive Engagement: Without being asked to do so, students who are cognitively engaged will look into new strategies to enhance their ability to study and set academic objectives for themselves.



Difference Between Traditional Learning and Constructive Learning

	Traditional Learning	Constructive Learning
Focus	Transmitting pre-defined knowledge from teacher to student.	Active construction of knowledge by the learner through experience and interaction
Method	Lectures, textbooks, rote memorization, standardized tests	Problem-solving, hands-on activities, collaborative projects, real-world applications
Role of the Teacher	Primarily a lecturer and source of information.	Facilitator and guide, supporting learners in their knowledge construction
Role of the Learner	Passive recipient of information.	Active participant in the learning process, building upon prior knowledge
Learning Outcomes	Often focused on factual recall and understanding of basic concepts.	Emphasizes deeper understanding, critical thinking, and application of knowledge.
Assessment	Typically involves summative assessments like exams and quizzes.	Formative assessments, focusing on student growth and understanding.
Classroom Environment	Often characterized by rows of desks and a focus on individual work.	Encourages interaction, collaboration, and exploration.



III. Application of Constructivism in Higher Education

- **Active Learning Strategies:** To involve students in the learning process, instructors employ a range of active learning strategies, including case studies, simulations, problem-solving, group discussions, and project-based learning.
- **Learner-centered Approach:** Considering each student's unique learning preferences and needs, instruction is created to be pertinent and meaningful to their experiences and lives.
- **The role of the instructor as a facilitator:** Rather than serving as the exclusive source of knowledge, instructors assist students in creating their own understanding by offering guidance and assistance.
- **Focus on Conceptual Understanding:** Constructivism prioritizes in-depth conceptual knowledge over rote memorization of procedures and facts.
- **Integration of Prior Knowledge:** Teachers make learning more memorable and significant by assisting students in making connections between new material and what they already know and have experienced.

IV. Role of constructivism in enhancing student engagement

In higher education, constructivism places more emphasis on students actively creating their own knowledge than passively absorbing it. When used properly, this strategy can greatly increase student engagement by creating a more dynamic, tailored, and important educational experience. Students gain greater comprehension and critical thinking abilities by taking charge of their education and working together with their peers.

Constructivism and students' engagement

Active Learning: Constructivism encourages students to actively engage in the learning process through conversations, problem-solving, and practical exercises, departing from traditional lecture-based instruction. **Real-World Relevance** Constructivist teaching methods frequently use real-world situations and issues, which gives pupils a more relevant and interesting education. **Collaborative Learning**



Constructivism encourages groups of students to learn from one another, exchange ideas, and expand on one another's expertise.

Personalized Learning: Tailored Approaches, Constructivist teachers modify their lesson plans to accommodate each student's unique needs while offering individualized guidance and criticism. **Student Agency**, by establishing their own objectives and taking part in the evaluation process, students are urged to take charge of their education. Constructivism aids in the development of metacognitive abilities in students, which allow them to evaluate their own learning, track their development, and modify their approach as necessary.

Meaningful Learning: Building on Prior Knowledge Constructivism acknowledges that learning is an active process that involves expanding on prior experiences and knowledge.

Deep Understanding Students gain a more profound and significant comprehension of the subject matter by actively creating their own knowledge. **Critical Thinking** Constructivist methods promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and the capacity to use information in novel and difficult contexts.

V. Critical Elements of Constructivist Education

If you intend to use constructivist concepts in your classroom or when creating your lessons, there are a few key elements to consider. These are taken from **Baviskar, Whitney, and Hartle (2009)**

Bring forth past knowledge: In connection with the learner's prior information, new knowledge is produced. Therefore, it is necessary to elicit pertinent past information during lessons. Pre-tests, casual interviews, and small-group warm-up exercises that ask on the recall of past information are among the activities.

Produce cognitive dissonance: Give them challenging tasks and difficulties to complete. As students tackle new issues and update their pre-existing schemas while solving the difficult task, they gain knowledge.



Apply knowledge with feedback :Give students the chance to assess new information and adjust what they already know. Activities should facilitate the comparison of pre-existing schema to the new situation. Examples of these activities include quizzes, presentations, and reflexive papers.

Reflect on learning: Give students a chance to demonstrate what they have learned to you and to themselves.

VI. Benefits of Constructivism in students' engagement

Deeper Understanding: Students gain a more thorough and enduring comprehension of the subject topic by actively creating their own knowledge.

Enhanced Engagement: Students find learning to be more interesting and pleasurable when active learning methodologies and pertinent content are used.

Improved Critical Thinking: Students are encouraged to analyze data, work through issues, and critically consider the ideas they are learning through constructivist methods.

Increased Motivation: Students are more likely to be inspired and take charge of their education when they are actively engaged in their education.

Personalized Learning: Constructivism makes it possible to create learning experiences that are tailored to the requirements and learning preferences of each individual student. In essence, constructivism in higher education provides a framework for creating learning environments that foster deeper understanding, engagement, and critical thinking by empowering students to actively construct their own knowledge.

VII. Conclusion

Essentially, a learner-centered approach equips students with the knowledge and abilities they need to thrive in a world that is changing quickly by empowering them to become active, engaged, and independent learners. In order to establish a vibrant and dynamic academic atmosphere, institutions must cultivate a balance between behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement. Cultivating each type of



engagement creates a layered student connection less easily affected by outside factors and economical contexts.

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