MARCH - 2024

NEWSLETTER

SLAIHEE - 2024

EDITORIAL

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As we stand at the edge of a technological revolution, the role of technology in education has become more pivotal than ever, reshaping higher education, and pushing us to unparalleled possibilities. Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a powerful force in this transformative journey, promising to redefine the future of higher education.

AI's impact on education is multifaceted, revolutionizing traditional teaching methodologies and fostering personalized learning experiences. With generative AI, educators can create adaptive curricula that cater to the diverse learning needs of students. This tailored approach can not only enhance engagement but also cultivate a deeper understanding of subjects.

Generative AI, with its ability to generate content and provide instant answers, poses a potential challenge to the traditional notions of student ethics during exams. The ease of accessing information may tempt students to compromise on academic honesty, raising concerns about plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration.

Higher education institutes should play a crucial role in mitigating these challenges and promoting a culture of integrity. It is essential to create awareness among students about the ethical use of AI tools. Educating them on the consequences of unethical practices and emphasizing the value of genuine learning can foster a sense of responsibility.

Moreover, higher education institutions should adapt their assessment methods to focus on critical thinking and problem-solving rather than rote memorization. By designing exams that require higher-order cognitive skills, AI's potential to provide instant answers becomes less of a concern.

To harness the benefits of Generative AI while maintaining academic integrity, higher education institutions should incorporate AI literacy into their curriculum. Teaching students how to use AI tools responsibly and ethically empowers them to navigate the digital landscape with integrity.

As Generative AI becomes integral for higher education, safeguarding student ethics requires a proactive approach. By raising awareness, implementing advanced monitoring systems, and fostering a culture of responsible AI use, institutions can ensure that the transformative power of AI aligns with the principles of academic integrity, preserving the true essence of learning and assessment.

Newsletter Highlights

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Developing the 4Cs of the 21st Century Skills

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Use of Experiential Learning for Improving Student Skills

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Developing a Motivational Perspective in Teaching and Learning

CREATING A FUNCTIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Students should be assisted in taking an active role in their own learning and discipline processes to develop skills in learning, self-control and a range of responsible behaviours (Kyle & Rogien, 2004 a). Given the foregoing, classroom management (CM) can be viewed as an essential component of teaching since it fosters students' academic achievement by establishing a conducive learning environment through a holistic approach (Albayrak & Ateskan, 2022).

To sustain a functional learning environment, effective teaching must be combined with proactive preventative methods, constructive or supportive techniques and corrective strategies (Kyle & Rogien, 2004 a). Proactive steps would be to properly plan, organize, and design the classroom from the very beginning; devise methods to hold students responsible for their learning; involve students in curriculum decisions so they feel invested in the material they are studying; and to have a collaboratively built, adopted, and maintained learning environment in the classroom (Kyle & Rogien, 2004 b; Oliver, 2007). The goal of the supportive aspect of CM is to model and instruct proper behaviour. Responsible behaviour has a direct impact on instruction since it increases student responsiveness, reduces distractions, and fosters cooperation. By emphasizing positive behaviour, supportive strategies reduce the need for corrective actions (Kyle & Rogien, 2004 c; Oliver, 2007). Strong teacher-student connections are the cornerstone of efficient

CM, which in turn leads to high student accomplishment. Instructors can create a positive learning environment in their classrooms and foster strong ties between themselves and their students by implementing strategies proven through research (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). It is vital to identify the type of misbehaviour shown by the student in order to use a situation-appropriate corrective intervention method. Different approaches are required to deal with misbehaviour exhibited by those who seek attention, avoidance, impulsivity, and lack of motivation (Kyle & Rogien, 2004 a; Oliver, 2007; Osman, 2017).

It is evident that several factors, including the personalities and personal values of the instructors, their teaching qualifications, the ages, characteristics, and needs of the students, as well as the policies, facilities, and administrative support of the universities, interact with the strategies in effective CM (Albayrak & Ateskan, 2022). Effective CM requires thorough research that takes into account various educational contexts and would immensely facilitate the development of intended students' skills.

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OUTCOME-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE-BASED PROCEDURES IN STUDENTS

(THIS ARTICLE IS BASED ON THE KEYNOTE SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE 19TH SLAIHEE CONFERENCE IN JULY 2023)

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) has emerged as a prominent principle in today's higher education sector, with its adoption rapidly spreading across universities and colleges. It is widely recognized as a significant stride towards enhancing the quality of higher education and equipping graduates to compete effectively on a global scale. As articulated by Spady in 1994, OBE involves a comprehensive focus on clearly defined outcomes that all students should demonstrate upon completing a program. In the context of Industrial Revolution 4.0 and education 4.0, a new set of skills has been identified for Higher Education (HE) students, and remedial measures to change university classroom teaching from its traditional transmission model to an OBE model seem not yet to have been well established. One of the persistent complaints of university teachers continues to be that, in their classrooms, their students are not engaged but remain passive, and unresponsive to answer and ask questions. In contrast, students chatter away outside the class setup. This should show that students are not used to readily showing their responsiveness and engagement when they are in classroom settings and on subject topics. With this aspect, in the OBE model, the expanded learning opportunities such as talking in the classroom should be progressively taken up mainly by the students rather than limited to the teacher. If that does not happen, student skills development can fail in HE teaching. Regarding student facilitation inside the classroom, there are stepwise procedures, based on knowledge to achieve student responsiveness and engagement, such as by using think-pair-share, minute papers, small groups and so on. If the students are "prepared" or 'primed' for this before they enter the classroom, it could considerably reduce their discomfort to engage inside the classroom. At this point, libraries can play a crucial role by filling the gap in students' discomfort in learning inside the classroom by helping them to provide spaces to develop their skills.

Designing Learning Spaces in Academic Libraries Ensures Practising Knowledge-based Procedures

Therefore, today academic libraries have a crucial role to play in creating learning centres and providing spaces that support students' learning habits beyond the formal classroom setup. By designing different learning spaces within the library, institutions can offer students diverse environments that cater to various learning preferences and activities. When designing the 'Information and Learning Centre (ILC)' the Science Faculty library of the University of Colombo, it considered the students' informal learning activities that match Education 4.0. This ILC consists of different learning spaces which support the development of students' skills that match with the modern environment.

The ILC or the Science Library of the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo is designed to provide designated areas that encourage student discussion through student group work discussions and collaboration. These collaborative learning spaces include group study areas equipped with technology and interactive tools to facilitate teamwork and brainstorming sessions. The furniture arrangement can be adjusted based on the size of the learning group. In contrast to the collaborative learning spaces, quiet study zones of the library are where students can focus and study individually without distractions. These areas provide a calm and peaceful atmosphere conducive to concentration and deep learning. Interactive study zones are also popular among the students and comfortable sofas and beanbags are used to create a comfortable and relaxed learning experience that promotes interaction and engagement. Flexible learning spaces designed in the library that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate different learning activities are essential. Furniture on wheels, movable partitions, and adaptable seating arrangements allow students to customize the space according to their needs, whether it's for group discussions, individual research, or presentations. The library skill lab of the Science Library provides this learning experience to learners with flexible study tables that can be arranged as round tables or long rows that are used to accommodate different learning activities. The Science Library has incorporated comfortable seating areas and lounge spaces where students can relax, engage in informal discussions, and exchange ideas. These areas foster social interactions and unexpected learning moments. The Open/after-hour study zone of the Science Library is used for this purpose. As this is an open area on the ground floor, students can comfortably use this space to experience the natural wind breeze. The coffee shop is located alongside this open study zone, allowing students to enjoy hot coffee while studying and providing a cozy, homelike environment for learning.

Integrating technology into library spaces enhanced student learning experiences. The Science Library provides technology-enabled spaces such as computer labs, E-resource centres, maker spaces, and Library studios or media production areas equipped with the necessary tools and software for digital projects and creative endeavours. The library studio consists of modern video conferencing equipment which facilitates video conferencing and multimedia production. There is a state-of-the-art auditorium furnished with 300 modern auditorium chairs and this space is exclusively used for professional or academic gatherings of the faculty and students. Apart from that, the Non-library classroom encourages both formal and informal learning practices among students. In addition to that this space is designed as an adjustable space ideal for workshops, activities of student societies and other functions. Students actively use this space to develop their speaking skills, leadership skills, career development activities, etc.

Evidence for the successful implementation of knowledge-based procedures
In reality, the Science Faculty Library shows the successful implementation of knowledge-based procedures. The library draws in more than 500 students daily, highlighting its significance as a hub for learning and academic activities. The presence of various dedicated learning spaces tailored for specific activities ensures that students have suitable environments to engage in their preferred learning methods.

Collaborative and interactive learning is actively encouraged within the Science library, fostering a culture of group work and knowledge sharing among students. The library facilitates continuous transitions between formal and informal learning methods, providing students with flexibility in their learning approaches. Students can easily switch between structured classroom learning and self-directed, informal learning within the library environment. Overall, the Science Faculty Library stands out as the most popular and fully engaged learning space within the university. Its implementation of knowledge-based procedures, collaboration with students, and provision of diverse learning spaces contribute to a vibrant and enriching learning experience for the entire university community.

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RUBRICS FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Rubrics are a set of guidelines or evaluation tools which can be useful in measuring the attainment of learning outcomes. They can be used to evaluate the quality of students' constructed responses including written, oral and visual work. Generally, a rubric has three essential features: evaluative criteria, quality definitions, and a scoring guide (Popham, 1997). These features help provide clarity on the expectations of student learning and are particularly useful for complex learning tasks.

Teachers should ideally provide students with the assessment standards used to evaluate their work. Thus, the use of rubrics is beneficial and provides a student-centred approach to assessment which can help students recognize the quality standards expected of them while encouraging the use of their judgment to improve their work (Reddy & Andrade, 2010). Yet another advantage in the context of assessment is that rubrics ensure the consistency of assessment as it overcomes barriers such as discrepancies due to personality variations or limitations of human information processing (Wolf & Stevens, 2007).

The use of rubrics has been shown to improve academic performance (Panadero et al, 2023) and also encourages reflective practice on the part of both students and teachers. For students, the reflection relates to their judgement of quality and subsequent revision as outlined above and this can contribute to developing self-regulated learning. In the case of teachers, the act of developing a rubric itself allows reflection on one's own standards and expectations for student learning and how far these are met in the classroom teaching and learning activities (Allen & Tanner, 2006). However, for this very reason developing a proper rubric on your own can be time-consuming; hence, their development should be reserved for the most important or complex activities (Wolf & Stevens, 2007). The wide availability of readymade rubrics for more generic student responses also encourages this approach.

A possible concern about using rubrics is that a poorly designed one could have a negative impact on teaching, learning and assessment tasks as it may inadvertently discourage certain higher-order thinking skills. Therefore, as teachers in higher education, it is necessary to be mindful and appreciate the creativity and innovation of student responses whilst using rubrics.

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20th Annual **Higher Education Conference** in Sri Lanka

on

Giving students a voice: evidence to have facilitated student voice generation through teaching

organized by

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Sub-themes can include the following (Abstracts due by 01st April & Full Papers by 10th June)

1.	Digital interventions	6.	Student-centered learning
2.	Evaluations/Assessments/Feedback	7.	Teaching aids
3.	Classroom environment	8.	Course/Curriculum re-design
4.	Reflective Mechanisms	9.	Peer learning
5.	Staff training and development	10.	Skill frameworks

Important deadlines:
- Submission of abstract# (250-300 word) — 01 April 2024, Monday
- Inviting the full paper/notifying non-acceptance — 13 May 2024, Monday
- Submission of full paper# — 10 June 2024, Monday
- Review comments sent to authors — 01 July 2024, Monday
- Submission of corrected full paper (camera-ready copy) — 15 July 2024, Monday
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For guidelines to write your Abstract & to submit Abstract - visit: http://www.slaihee.org

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THE 19TH ANNUAL SLAIHEE CONFERENCE

OUTCOME-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE-BASED PROCEDURES IN STUDENTS

The 19th Annual SLAIHEE conference was held on 28th July 2023 under the theme, "*Outcome-based higher education for developing knowledge-based procedures in students*". It was organized by SLAIHEE and supported by the Informatics Institute of Technology (IIT).

After holding the conference online for three consecutive years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis-related issues, it was held face-to-face in 2023 at the IIT School of Computing, Colombo 04. The inauguration of the event commenced with Professor Sunethra Perera (Immediate Past President, SLAIHEE) giving the opening remarks. This was followed by Dr Iroja Caldera, (President, SLAIHEE), welcoming the guests and all participants. Following the welcome note, she invited the Guest of Honour, Mr Mohan Fernando (CEO of IIT) to address the audience.

The keynote address titled "*Outcome-based higher education for developing knowledge-based procedures*" was delivered by Ms Sajeewani D Somaratna (Acting Librarian, University of Colombo) and provided many examples from her experiences at the Information Learning Centre of the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo. The inauguration concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr Jinendra Dissanayake (President-Elect, SLAIHEE).

After the morning tea, participants were introduced to the Dr Shrinika Weerakoon Memorial Award for the best paper.

Ten peer-reviewed papers were presented during the sessions and many of the papers led to lively discussions during the Q&A time. The presented papers focused on how teaching practices were improved by university academics and secondary school teachers in relation to how specified higher education skills are developed.

The inauguration was followed by the 18th Annual General Meeting of SLAIHEE. The conference also included a post-lunch mini workshop facilitated by Prof Suki Ekaratne. It was titled 'Designing plans to improve selected student skills' and included a group work session which drew an enthusiastic response from participants.

Please click on the following link to download the conference proceedings for the 19th Annual SLAIHEE Conference: Conference Proceedings

Please click on the following link to download the full version of the keynote speech presented at the 19th Annual SLAIHEE Conference: Keynote Speech

Please click on the following link to view more details about the winners of the Dr Shrinika Weerakoon Memorial Award: Winners 2023

WINNERS OF THE DR SHRINIKA WEERAKOON MEMORIAL AWARD FOR THE BEST PAPER 2023

Use of FouRe's Method to Develop Paraphrase-Building Skill in Higher Education Students

-by-
Ms Shalini Kaduwela
Senior Lecturer
Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology

Encouraging Development of Peer Learning Skill Through In-Class Activities to Enhance Student Learning Experience and Interactions

-by-
Ms Abarnah Kirupananda
Senior Lecturer
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DEVELOPING THE 4CS OF THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

In the current era, there is an expectation that students are proficient in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Hence, these skills must be developed in students at an early stage. Levin-Goldberg (2012) has shown that these 4Cs can be added to the curriculum, thereby developing students (Aben Ahmed, 2022).

Creative thinking involves analyzing information, solving problems, and making informed decisions. Critical thinking encourages individuals to question assumptions, evaluate evidence, and think logically. Effective communication is crucial in the 21st century. It includes the ability to express ideas clearly and concisely, listen actively, understand diverse perspectives, and communicate using various mediums such as written, verbal, and digital communication. The ability to work effectively in teams and collaborate with diverse groups of people is essential. This skill emphasizes cooperation, interpersonal skills, and the ability to contribute positively to group dynamics. In the context of 21st-century learning, creativity involves thinking innovatively, generating original ideas, and approaching challenges with a fresh perspective. It encourages individuals to be imaginative and open to new possibilities (Limna et al., 2022).

To prepare the students for the 21st century, the teachers must inspire them and facilitate learning activities. This could include various activities such as classroom discussions, workshops, group work along with a presentation, mini projects, and hands-on practical sessions as teaching and learning activities.

The 4Cs provide a comprehensive framework for fostering skills beyond traditional academic knowledge, preparing individuals to navigate the complexities of the contemporary world and contribute meaningfully to society and the workplace. Teaching in class should be transformed in such a way that it enables students to acquire the 4Cs.

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USE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR IMPROVING STUDENT SKILLS

Experiential learning refers to the process of learning by doing. David Kolb developed the "Theory of Experiential Learning" which describes learning as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984). According to Kolb (1984), the cycle has four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation is important for a teacher to identify gaps in student knowledge and skills, then reflect on them and plan suitable learning activities for them. Fink (2003) goes further and suggests the need to add components of experiential learning and opportunities for reflective dialogue that can enhance the overall learning experience of students. The experiential learning cycle has been extensively used in addressing 20th-century learning-related problems (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Hawtrey, 2007). However, it is still effective and can also be used to enhance the 21st-century learning skills of the students such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. It guides learners to move through the process while engaging them in numerous activities leading to knowledge creation, hands-on experiences and reflection. Studies highlight the need to make experiential learning a more substantial part of curricula while expanding

diverse learning opportunities to meet student needs by providing them necessary skills to be reflective and action-oriented. Such skills are vital for developing a base for lifelong learning (Coker & Porter 2016; Hawtrey, 2007; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Both in-class and out-of-class activities can be selected to facilitate students gaining a 'rich' learning experience if planned with a cyclical sequence (Fink, 2003). Caffarella (1988) also emphasizes that methods and techniques of experiential learning should be applied to four key phases of the learning processes in higher education. These are the design of course structure, the design of programme structure, the design of field experience and the design of in-class experience to enhance students' knowledge and skills through the experiential learning process. Therefore, it is important to select suitable methods in teaching, learning and assessment techniques to provide a structure for engaging students in experiential learning activities to acquire necessary knowledge and skills. Interactive lectures, panels, debates, buzz groups, case studies, small/large group discussions, field visits, student-developed criteria and reflective journals are some of the techniques which can be used for this purpose.

Article by
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DEVELOPING A MOTIVATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN T&L

Intrinsic motivation is the wanting to learn without any external inducement or punishment. An intrinsically motivated student undertakes an activity, for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes (Wagner, 2007). Developing a motivational perspective in teaching and learning is crucial for creating an engaging and effective educational environment. Motivated students are more likely to be active learners, take initiative, and become responsible for their learning. Further, intrinsically motivated individuals take part in an activity out of curiosity without the need for a reward or compensation, for the sake of completion, or for a desire to contribute (Merdekawati et al. 2007).

Self-determination theory, developed by Deci and Ryan in 1985, explains what drives the intrinsic motivation of an individual, and these are, competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Wagner, 2007). To facilitate a learning environment in which students are intrinsically motivated, we need to provide an opportunity for them to meet these three basic needs and become self-determined.

Therefore, educators must actively encourage intrinsic motivation in students so that they can be more successful, and actively participate in enjoyable learning. A teacher's motivational perspective should be focused on several attributes: attention to the personalization of instruction, environment, creativity, student choices/involvement, verbal praise, and behaviour (Merdekawati et al. 2007). Encouraging curiosity, setting challengeable tasks, creating a culture of appreciation providing constructive feedback, and incorporating technology may also promote intrinsic motivation among learners.

Intrinsically motivated students become both academically and socially successful (Merdekawati et al. 2007). By nurturing intrinsic motivation, educators can help students develop lifelong learning, promoting a self-directed and positive approach to education

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FUTURE EVENTS

SLAIHEE Conference 2024

Abstract Submission:

01st April 2024

Submission of Full Paper:

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15th July 2024

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