

SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS: BE INNOVATIVE, FUTURISTIC, RESPONSIVE, LEARNER CENTRIC AND TRANSFORMATIONAL FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO BE SUSTAINABLE!

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ABSTRACT

The case illustrates how a responsive educator could innovate and develop education support programs which are learner centric and engaging the learner kindling aspiration for life-long learning for students. Citing the experiences vouched by passed out students, the author emphasises how adding simple but dynamic attributes to the curriculum can bring about transformation among the students making them future ready.

Keywords: Sustainable education, Innovation, Learner centric, Transformation

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is the buzzword in today's world and Sustainable education is an emergent concept. Education by nature is transformational and to be sustainable it should be enduring and supported by a curriculum which will mean the learners have to be closely involved in the learning process including in the decision for what they should learn and how they should learn. In the recent 'Case Report' on "Churning the Best Performer from the Last Performer!", a Case Study on Innovations in B-Schools" (Filomina, 2019), the author has brought to limelight the need for higher education and professional education to be transformational for it be to be relevant to the ever changing environment. A sustainable curriculum (Jay & Hayo, 2020) should be future oriented and dynamic in nature, delivered through learner centric methods. which would also equip the learner with professional competencies to adapt to the changing context. A responsive curriculum, which recognizes the changing needs of a global world delivered through effective teaching and learning methods will have a significant influence on the making of a management graduate competent to take up the challenges of a disruptive world.

To deliver quality education in such a complex and dynamic world is a major challenge for any educational institution (Filomina, 2019). It calls for

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constantly innovating new methods to entice, engage and enrich the learning experience of the student who undergoes the program. By meaningfully integrating such methods into the curriculum along with fulfilling the academic requirements leaves a longstanding impression on the learner. The case report testifies how professional level education like PGDM/MBA can entail transformation, by adopting a responsive curriculum, which recognizes the changing needs of a global world delivered through effective teaching and learning methods which are learner-centric. According to the author there is no one single method that can be considered as best practice in teaching and learning for B-Schools. Rather, B-Schools need to adopt multiple practices to fit their unique context, utilize teacher capabilities, and above all respond to the needs, abilities, and interests of their students to entail transformation. Professional and higher education institutions need to create a learning environment that puts learner as its core participant (Istance & Dumont, 2010) and position themselves as institutions that will support students throughout their careers by creating courses that are suitable for every kind of business student. Such institutions will be able to deliver sustainable learning where by students develop awareness about the learning process and become competent and equip themselves for the world of work which is ever dynamic.

The case narrates the story of a B-school which recognized that a well-designed customized curriculum that offers the student a higher degree of ownership and collaboration can be more effective than a generalized curriculum. When students know what they want to learn and when they are involved in the design of the curriculum, they take more responsibility for themselves as learners. Courses and curricula are designed or re-imagined to continually renew it in order to keep pace with the economic, technological, ecological and social changes. The curriculum should be supported by various student driven activities which are meant to equip learners with a commitment to consciousness and the disposition to act upon germane observations. The author has agreed with the extant research findings that there are significant benefits for students when they have a say in what they learn, how they learn, and what help they need. Where their voice is sought and heard students are more likely to have enhanced learning partnerships with teachers, be more motivated to learn, think more deeply, and understand and develop their skills as learners. In other words, they take more responsibility for themselves as learners.

Educators should realize that much of what is taught based on past knowledge and ways of living often does not equip the learner to deal with disruptive, uncertain and complex situations of the present and the future. The future of education is going to be defined and shaped by technology. Educational programs should be designed to facilitate continuous renewal embedded into it in order to keep pace with technological and social change and, indeed, to allow learners to think forward and prepare for what may arise. The need for accelerating the cycle of learning, unlearning and relearning at individual, team and organizational levels is felt more than ever before. Transformation is expected to occur as students are taken on a journey of pure learning, responding to their queries, instilling an environment of curiosity and interactivity amongst themselves and the educators. The teachers should embrace new technology, innovative methods and expand their role to be mentors, and guides rather than content experts. The system should empower and equip students and those involved in the education with the knowledge, the skills and the will to educate in ways that are

responsive to change that they should become the change partners. This calls for vigilance, mindfulness, focus and cognizance of both internal and external conditions.

A sustainable world requires sustainable education system as well. Understanding the influence and relationships amongst system elements is of vital importance in an era of tenacious global challenges, where teamwork and collaboration are paramount. Education that enables students to adapt beyond the current context and immediate occupational demands provides enduring skills that will differentiate career paths. Educational programs which are co-created with involvement of the stakeholders will only survive the complexity and dynamics of the changing environment. The system should be tenable, adaptive yet resilient while responding to the change which calls for agility and constant innovation for the sustainability of any educational program.

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