Critical thinking on and create their own curriculums [name of the writer]

Technology, Development

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Introduction

Traditionally, colleges follow a top to bottom strategy, where all the major curricular planning takes place at a leadership level. Even there are myriad educational institutes, where the liberty of choosing the subjects is limited. On the other side, there are many upcoming educational institutions, where student-let curriculum is an emerging phenomenon. With excellent educational system in United States and United Kingdom, the educational planners are still concerned with high percentage of dropouts in the first year of university that is 25% in United States and 11% in United Kingdom (Yorke & Longden 2006, 16). This scenario causes immense problems for universities, individuals and the society. Various studies identify a direct relationship between the progression and success of student with his/her early experiences at the college.

The high level of dropouts in the college represents low level of ownership and engagement amongst the students. According to Piper (2006), educational institutes should give more liberty, autonomy and critical

thinking to the students to generate a sense of ownership within them and must engage them. Chan (2001) identifies that control and choice in the learning system leads to enhanced motivational level. He identified a direct relationship between empowerment and engagement. Same results were found in a study conducted in United Kingdom amongst 50 students. In organizational setting, employees tend to give better input if they are made part of the product development phase. A sense of ownership is developed in the person, which guides him/her to unleash his potential and provide his best. This does not only generate a greater level of motivation but a synergy is developed around him/her, which assist the organization.

Liberty in Course Choice & Student-led Curriculum

Numerous studies have shown a direct relationship between curriculum control and choice to increased level of motivation amongst students. No matter, if someone is running an educational institute, public limited company, SME, or an NGO, the basic requirement to drive human capital of the organization is motivation. Enhanced level of motivation enhances the performance and in return, it benefits the organization. In an educational institute, the basic aim is to motivate students to participate in the educational activities. Considering a high dropout rate in United States, concrete strategies must be applied to motivate the students especially in their initial years of education. As studies depicts a direct relation between curriculum control and choice to enhanced level of motivation; therefore, educational institutes should provide freedom to students in choosing their own courses and create their own curriculums.

At the Institute for Research in Arts, University of California, the curriculum cannot be planned according to fixed course objectives and a pre-set syllabus because students of the institute are the co-creators with the teachers in the class. They course take different directions based on the interests and ideas of teachers and students. There might be a possibility there that a course like neighborgapbridge can start with a list of shopping list at the first day of students and it can subsequently progress towards a grocery store trip. The results found from such collaborative type of learning have been phenomenal for the institute.

An excellent approach that supports this notion can be achieve through student created assignments. In this method, students are the creators of the assignment and they set the assessment goals. These assignments can be shared with other students of the class. In this methodology, students have the entire responsibility to design, give ideas, write assignment and make develop the solutions of the questions (Krause & Coates 2008, 493). These assignments can include case studies, exercises, problems, mini case studies, discussion seminars or in-class activities. This strategy allows students to understand the subject from a multitude of perspectives and helps him/her to connect the conceptual and real life aspect of it. High level of participation and engagement can be achieved through student-generated assignments.

Steve Jobs and Liberty in Choosing Courses

There are myriad real-life examples why there should be liberty in choosing the courses. For instance, Steve Job during his student life in Stanford

University was actually enrolled for an engineering degree, but he developed an interest in design. He started taking the art and design classes, which he was not required to take during his studies. His dual interest and a extra course at Stanford allowed him to amalgamate his engineering sense with an amazing sense of design and thus he created, Apple Inc. Apart from few specific mandatory requirement for certain course, the student should be given a complete freedom to choose any course.

In Spokane, Washington, a high school has developed a unique course named as Practicum in Community Involvement. This course encourages and engages students to develop their own one-year long learning projects. For these projects, certain guidelines are set that includes research, action and reflection. In this process, they are required to find a mentor that may help them in this learning process. The result of this program has been successful and myriad high schools are now replicating the same strategy to enhance the level of engagement and motivation amongst their students (McInnes 2001, 105).

Advising

Conclusion

References

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