

Engagement in classroom participation education essay



Participation usually means students speaking in class: answer and ask questions, make comments, and join in discussions. Students who do not participate in those ways mentioned above are often considered to be passive and are generally penalized when participation is graded (Jacob & chase, 1992).

Participation in classroom:

To engage the students in Participation in a classroom is an important method of teaching. It provides the students opportunity to receive input from fellow students, to apply their knowledge and to enhance public speaking skills. From the Participation of teachers can get a more accurate idea that what is the understanding level of students about the concept being taught (Maznevski 1996).

Engagement in classroom participation:

Engagement within the learning environment generally refers to the relationship between the learner and the content or topic being pursued. While the highest levels of engagement are seen when the learner is passionate about the topic, significant levels of engagement can be achieved through a variety strategies that actively involve the learner in activities and environments that make learning both interesting and challenging. Engagement with content leads to higher levels of learning (Whelan, C. 1997).

Our experience reveals that for many students class participation is a big problem. Teachers often complain about student's passive behavior in class participation. But up till now there has been a very little research into the

promotion of class participation. But studies have been conducted in social sciences and business studies (e. g., Egan 1996, Hyde & Ruth 2002, Litz 2003).

More often low self-esteem, anxiety, and general lack of confidence is considered responsible for student's non-participation in the classroom (Kennedy, 1997; Thomson, 2001).

Student Participation:

Lack of participation could be due to multiple factors. My first thought was that student's reluctance could be due to lack of understanding, but it could very well be that he does not feel connected to the curriculum; he cannot relate to it. Students who are empowered by their school experiences develop ability, confidence, and motivation to succeed academically. They participate competently in instruction as a result of having developed a confident cultural identity as well as appropriate school-based knowledge and interactional structures (Cummins, 1983).

Active learning

Bonwell, C. C., and J. A. Eison (1991) suggest that Active learning is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. Active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing. The core elements of active learning are student activity and engagement in the learning process.

Adopting instructional practices that engage students in the learning process is the defining feature of active learning. The importance of student

engagement is widely accepted and there is considerable evidence to support the effectiveness of student engagement on a broad range of learning outcomes.

Importance of language:

Language is a mean of communication by which human beings express their feelings, emotions and fulfill their needs.

According to Tariq Rehman, 1996:

Language is a coin and what it buys in the market is “ power”. Higher status and attractive jobs are attached with English language. The demand for learning a language is linked to empowerment. So English language is promoted in university education, so that the students can attain their goals. But this prevailing of language in higher education is not as simple as it seems because all the students have diverse demographics which do not equally support the speaking of English in classroom.

The language barrier becomes an additional hurdle in student’s classroom participation. Kachru (1992 pp. 66-67) found that poor pronunciation and Accent problem stops many students to participate in classroom discussion.

Kachru, (1995) points out majority of Asian students study through the medium of English but they are not proficient enough in English and reflect their regional varieties of English while speaking.

Sociolinguistics view of language:

Sociolinguists are of the view that individual differences in oral communication among students are dependent upon social variables like age, status, ethnicity, gender etc. when students step in classroom, their pattern of language is already influenced by these factors (Scott, 1995).

In the earlier studies, student's communicative competence was considered as an important set of rules by learning these rules they can comprehend and participate in classroom context. If the student fulfills the specific requirements about language use, he can communicate effectively with class fellows and teachers. If they don't comprehend the class room communication system their learning is affected and they learn comparatively less. Due to language problem they participate passively in classroom activities. Difference between home language and classroom language also reflect upon development of student's communicative competence. If these both languages are identical somehow, students are motivated to learn literacy events taken place in classroom (Morrow, 1993; van Kleeck, 1990, 1995, 1998; van Kleeck & Schuele, 1987; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998).

Vygotsky's social constructivist theory played a major role in language learning theories. He is of the views that all learning is socially integrated.

Motivation:

The process of learning begins when an individual faces various social situations. These situations provide certain type of experience to the individual as the nature of the situation, which further enables the individual

to behave in a certain way. All of these social situations give some sort of instigation, which act as motives and drivers for the individual. These motives and drives may be evident in the form of behavior of the individual concerned. Such kind of behavior undertakes the purposes which are indirectly dominated by the drives and motives. Therefore, a motive may be said as the base of the behavior of the individual, which works as internal factor to make individual behave in the desired direction.

A motive is an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a person's behavior. It is not observed directly but inferred from his behavior or simply assumed to exist in order to explain his behavior (Murry, 1964, p. 7).

These motives not only describe the desired goal but also the role of the individuals in the concerning social situation. This undertakes individual's social as well as psychological condition.

Motivation is a general term used to refer to any arousal of an individual to goal-directed behavior. The term motivation when applied to human is a social-psychological concept and motivation cannot be considered apart from the individual's conception of himself, his social status and roles, and the existence of society and culture which define situations and appropriate and desirable behavior.

(Theodorson and Theodorson 1969, p. 26)

Motivation & participation:

Studies have linked motivation and participation to students' achievement (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Students who gave importance to learning the

material and have greater expectancy to be successful in a course are more likely to achieve at higher levels (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Learners with a more positive attitude towards lifelong learning tend to be more persistent, more self-directed, and more self-confident (de la Harpe & Radloff, 2000). They efficiently use cognitive strategies to maximize their learning (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

Achievement Motivation:

Achievement motivation is an important determinant of aspiration, effort and persistence when an individual expects that his performance will be evaluated in relation to some standard of excellence (Sill 1972, p. 27).

Relationship between Performance and Achievement motivation:

Atkinson and Connor (1966) conducted a study to find out the relationship between the task performance of students and the strength of their achievement motivation. The texture of the study revealed that the students with stronger motives to achieve success and avoid failure show greater performance for difficult risks and more efficient and faster tasks performance for difficult risks and efficient and faster tasks performance than those who had relatively weak motive to achieve success and avoid failure. The finding of this study suggests that stronger achievement motives determine the degree of the performance of the individuals which struggling to achieve their certain desired goals In the same token (Atkinson, & O'Conner. 1996).

Achievement goal theory:

Various kinds of purposes of students towards participating in class room activities are based on their sentiments, thinking, performance and attainment according to achievement goal theory (Midgley, 2002; Ames, 1992).

Most of the researchers emphasized on two major types of goals:

Mastery goal: it enhances competence in the students.

Performance goal: it concentrates on acting upon that competence.

Both of these goals may be attained through the personal goal of the students (Urduan 1997; Kaplan, Middleton, Urduan, & Midgley, 2002).

Personal Goals

The competence of the students might be improved through their personal goal and that competence is based on their own prior performance instead of the other's (Maehr, 1984; Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989).

Kaplan et al., (2002) argue that students of full devotion for the sake of being proficient in some specific skills may show their mastery goal.

Both performance-approach goals and performance-avoid goals are ultimately depend on students' personal goal (Skaalvik, 1997; Middleton & Midgley, 1997).

Diligence, attempts and efficacy beliefs are related with performance approach goal. However, refusal from participating in class room for the sake

of achieving some tasks is often linked to performance-avoid goals (Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999; Kaplan et al., 2002; Urdan, Ryan, Anderman, & Gheen, 2002).

Adopting difficult tasks, good learning strategies, questing for something at the time of need, positive behaviour according to various tasks and fascinating class room atmosphere are the good consequences which could be attained through mastery goals

(Ames, 1992; Urdan, 1997; Kaplan et al., 2002).

Classroom Goal Structures:

Ames (1992) stated that according to goal theory, class room, the nature of the students and their beliefs may affect the motivational factor of the students.

Class rooms with more performance- focused may put negative impact on students than that of a normal class room. Negative results may include various types of cheating and different kind of misbehavior in the classrooms (Kaplan et al., 2002; Turner et al., 2002; Urdan et al., 2002).

Multiple Goals

Students may have multiple goals along with other various types of goals as some researchers have noticed this in different ways. This is compound of different sorts of personal goals and it is therefore, called multiple goals. A few researchers indicated that multiple goals may have positive or negative effect as well (Meece & Holt, 1993; Pintrich, 2000; Wentzel, 1991)

Teacher Instruction and Achievement Goal Structures:

The students perceive their goal structures according to the instructions of their teachers (Ames, 1992). Different teachers give instructions according to their vision. Middle class teachers detail their students according to their knowledge and in the same manners teachers of all classes motivate and direct their students in their own way.

Turner et al., (1998) gave a brilliant idea about motivation of the students that what teacher says and in which manner, is main pillar among students to be motivated.

The Association between Personal and Environmental Factors

Covertly or overtly, the motivation of the students depends upon their behaviour as individuals as they treat in the classroom whether they obey the instructions or demonstrate ignorantly (e. g., Elliot et al., 1999; Pintrich, 2000; Patrick, Ryan, & Pintrich, 1999).

Most of the researches try to inquire in learning process in the class room but they seldom effort for knowing the atmosphere of interaction among students that how much differently they behave in the same classroom (Patrick et al., 2001; Turner et al., 1998, 2002)

Aspect of person-in-context undertakes the responsibility to know how individuals and environments influence on each other (Lemos, 2001; Vauras, Salonen ; Magnusson & Stattin, 1998).

Socio-cultural theories are used to assay the process of children being socialized in the classroom and in the systems of meanings along with the way they try to take these meanings by their own as well (Brown & Campione, 1994).

` According to Rogoff, (1990), pint of view, the child and social world are essencial for each other.

Factors affecting students' participation in the class and suggestions as well:

More of the students appear to have an inactive role in the class room participation (Weaver & Qi, 2005).

Synthesis, evaluation, analysis and application are the more important things which are to be developed during class room participation (Tinto, 1997); (ACER, 2008).

Weaver & Qi (2005) argues that in large class room size, most of the students maintain their secrecy as well and have less opportunity to participate in the class room activities.

The power of the instructor (Howard & Baird, 2000), gender and the age discrimination of the pupils (Howard, James & Taylor, 2002), the cognitive level towards class room(Chung, 2000; Tinto 1997) and also the sentiments of the students (Chung, 2000; Howard et al., 2002) are such factors which have significant influence on the interaction amongst students in the class room.

The societal behaviour of students and teachers as well has a great effect on class room participation (Weaver and Qi (2005).

The students get frightened by the instructor and lose their confidence to participate in different kind of activities in the class room (Dallimore, Hertenstein & Platt, 2004; Chung, 2000).

To lessen the gap among students and teachers and to provide student-friendly atmosphere enhance the degree of participation in various activities in the class (Weaver & Qi, 2005; Auster & MacRone, 1994). It means, the more the social links among student-teacher and among student-student, the more student-centered atmosphere there will be.

The participation in the class room increases the reasoning of the students, critical thinking and creativity skills in them as well. (Tinto, 2002; Foster et al., 2009; Wilson & Fowler, 2005). The best learning environment and participation could be increased through demolishing the factors like uncertainty and anxiety in the class room (Sim, 2006).

McInnis (2001) suggested that the participation of the students could be increased in the class room through redesigning our curriculum and different types of courses in a significant manner which may prove a mile stone in engaging different groups of students with one another. Tinto (1997), related class room with academic and social interchange and by keeping this point of in mind, even a lay man can propose the idea of producing the social links among students with other students and with teachers also.

Confidence & Classroom participation:

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines 'confidence' as the 'mental attitude of trusting in or relying on; firm trust, reliance, faith, assured expectation, assurance arising from reliance (on oneself, circumstances, etc.)'. In the literature on the topic, confidence has been defined as a trait (Bernstein et al, 1994; McKinney, 1960) and as a situationally specific concept (Brodie, Reeve & Whittaker, 1995; Champion, 1993).

Confidence is "assuredness in oneself and in one's capabilities" (Erwin & Kelly, 1985, p. 395).

In relation to social interaction it has been defined by Manning & Ray (1993) as "calmness and assertiveness during social interaction" (p. 180).

Manning & Ray (1993) found confidence as being the opposite of shyness and as situational.

Some researchers referred to self-efficacy as confidence (Wanberg, Watt & Rumsey, 1996) whereas, Bandura, originator of the term "self-efficacy" wrote in 1997, that confidence and self-efficacy are not the same.

Confidence has been thought to be part of self-esteem or to be synonymous with the concept of self-esteem (Wells & Marwell, 1976), whereas Coopersmith (1967) argued that self-confidence was a term used to describe the "subjective state" of self-esteem and reported that "an individual who expresses negative attitudes towards himself thereby indicates that he has little confidence in his abilities to deal effectively with the events that confront him."

Lawrence (1999) defined self-esteem as confidence writing “ confidence is self-esteem in practice and has two aspects:

Confidence in abilities

Confidence in personality

Owens (1993) viewed self-esteem as being comprised of general self-confidence and general self-deprecation; he explained general self-confidence in terms of positive self-evaluation.

Indeed, this lack of confidence’ (DFES, 2002, p. 1) on the part of large numbers of students was considered specifically in recent policy documents concerned with the drive to enhance basic skills. It is, certainly, a crucial factor in learning at all levels.

Reisenberger (2002) suggests that although there are still situational and institutional barriers for student’s participation in the classroom to be overcome more attention need to be directed towards dispositional barriers, particularly factors linked to learner’s confidence.

Students feel shyness when they are asked to take part in classroom (Fassinger 1995; CELT 1998).

Sometimes students show lack of confidence because of the fear that they may seem unintelligent to their fellows and teachers while answering the questions or presenting their point of view on an assigned topic and so they feel it comfortable to remain silent (CELT, 1998).

These issues can sometimes be traced to a lack of participation by students (Howard & Henney 1998).

Many research work indicates that although the individual learner can affect his/her own level of confidence, tutors, peers, mentors and workplace supervisors can help increase the learner's confidence by providing support, encouragement, and constructive feedback. Such learning support needs to unpack meanings of confidence in task-specific contexts in order to overcome particular dispositional barriers.

Self confidence:

The students who feel shy and hesitate to ask the various questions in the class are assumed to have lower level of achievement motivation. Whereas those who do not feel this kind of hesitation are expected to have higher level of achievement motivation

Students' Personality Type and Attitudes towards Classroom Participation:

Personality is one of the affective factors that are equally important for explaining differential success among students. Extroversion is linked with risk-taking; introversion is considered under the concept of self-esteem (Brown, 2000).

Passive students: mean who do take part in class room activities frequently are often punished by the teachers. Overtly or covertly, their being passive in the class could be either because of their personality. Personality is two types as following:

Extrovert

Introvert

These types of personality affect classroom participation according to the situation.

Personality is also more important for learning process. Extrovert personality is linked with risk-taking where as introvert is associated with self-esteem.

(Brown, 2000)

Similarly, Galvan and Fukada (1997/1998) put forth their experience of avoidance from participation in student-centered classroom because of personality factor. They also concluded that extroverts participated in the classroom more than introverts. Often students of introvert personality couldn't raise even a single question.

Extroverts are more interactive than that of introvert students in class room because introverts like to have few friends in the class but extroverts keep on enhancing their company (Myers, 1962).

Introverts often fail to achieve the norms of the academic requirements due to less participation in classroom (Barrett & Connot, 1986) as Carskadon (1978) concluded that extroverts, though have few thoughts, they act more than that of introverts who have more thinking power but act less than extroverts. Myers (1962), suggests that extroverts tend to prefer learning situations that afford interaction, while introverts tend to prefer small groups. Galvan and Fukada (1997/1998) found that extrovert students

participated more than introverts. The participants who self-reported as <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-in-classroom-participation-education-essay/>

having passive learners were least likely to initiate a question or volunteer an answer to a teacher's question. Additionally, knowledge of personal preferences can help teachers and administrators understand and predict student performance so they can restructure the situation to facilitate more student participation. Barrett and Connot (1986) found that introvert learners do not get involved in classroom activities and have lower academic achievement. Extrovert students usually produce more action with fewer thoughts whereas introvert students produce various thoughts with little action (Carskadon, 1978).

Constructivism of theory of classroom learning:

Constructivism theory of learning and knowledge emphasis upon the learner's active participation in constructing his own knowledge (Anderson, 1987; Jonassen, 1995; Resnick 1983, 1987; Schauble, 1990; von Glasersfeld, 1989, 1992). Constructivists consider that knowledge is gained when a learner uses his prior knowledge to understand the new information. So knowledge can be enhanced by instruction or guidance of teacher, but it is not a direct outcome of teacher's instruction. As the construction of knowledge is dependant upon the prior knowledge of student, so all students get the understanding from teacher's lecture according to his existing level of knowledge.

Social constructivist perspective:

Knowledge is socially constructed through collaborative efforts made by human beings (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Cole, 1985; Lewson, Kerby & Cook, 1995; Lave, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978). Knowledge can not be gained or a new concept is difficult to understand without its social context.
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Classroom factors:

The construction of knowledge is also affected by classroom environment factors (Garner, 1990). A new concept is well understood by interaction with fellow students and teacher in classroom.

Student' Self-regulation of classroom behavior:

Self-regulation of cognition and behavior is an important aspect of student learning and academic performance in the classroom context (Corno & Mandinach, 1983; Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985). There are a variety of definitions of self-regulated learning, but three components seem especially important for classroom performance. First, self-regulated learning includes students' metacognitive strategies for planning, monitoring, and modifying their cognition (e. g., Brown, Bransford, Campione, & Ferrara, 1983; Corno, 1986; Zimmerman & Pons, 1986, 1988).

Students' management and control of their effort on classroom academic tasks has been proposed as another important component. For example, capable students who persist at a difficult task or block out distractors (i. e., noisy classmates) maintain their cognitive engagement in the task, enabling them to perform better (Corno, 1986; Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985). A third important aspect of self-regulated learning that some researchers have included in their conceptualization is the actual cognitive strategies that students use to learn, remember, and understand the material (Corno & Mandinach, 1983; Zimmerman & Pons, 1986, 1988).

Knowledge of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies is not sufficient to promote learners achievement; they also must be motivated to use the

strategies as well as regulate their cognition and effort (Paris, Lipson, & Wixson, 1983; Pintrich, 1988, 1989; Pintrich, Cross, Kozma, & McKeachie, 1986). There are some classroom tasks that can motivate the students (cf., Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985; Malone, 1981), it is also evident to suggest that student's perceptions of the classroom and their individual motivational orientations and beliefs about learning are relevant to cognitive engagement and classroom participation and performance (e. g., Ames & Archer, 1988; Nolen, 1988).

General expectancy-value model of motivation (cf., Eccles, 1983; Pintrich, 1988, 1989):

This model presents three motivational components linked to the three different components of self-regulated learning.

An expectancy component, which includes students' beliefs about their ability to perform a task in the classroom:

The research suggests that students who believe they are capable engage in more metacognition, use more cognitive strategies, and are more likely to persist at a task than students who do not believe they can perform the task (e. g., Fincham & Cain, 1986; Paris & Oka, 1986; Schunk, 1985).

A value component, which includes students' goals and beliefs about the importance and interest of the task:

It includes students' goals for the task and their beliefs about the importance and interest of the task. This motivational component essentially concerns

students' reasons for doing a task. The study recommends that students with <https://assignbuster.com/engagement-in-classroom-participation-education-essay/>

a motivational orientation involving goals of mastery, learning, and challenge, as well as beliefs that the task is interesting and important, will participate in more meta-cognitive activity, more cognitive strategy use, and more effective effort management (e. g., Ames & Archer, 1988; Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Eccles, 1983; Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988; Nolen, 1988; Paris & Oka, 1986).

An affective component, which includes students' emotional reactions to the task:

It deals with students' affective or emotional reactions to the task. There are a number of affective reactions that might be relevant (e. g., anger, pride, guilt), but in a classroom

learning context one of the most important seems to be test anxiety (Wigfield & Eccles, 1989).

Effect of Socio-economic factor on classroom participation:

Socioeconomic status is positively correlated with both educational attainment and achievement. The higher the student's socioeconomic status, the greater his or her educational accomplishment is likely to be.

The national Longitudinal Studies revealed several direct positive relationships between educational success (classroom participation) and socioeconomic status. One such relationship was found between the student's socioeconomic statuses and their scores on various standardized tests administered as part of the study. One each test students from successively higher socioeconomic categories got better mean scores.

Students come to college/university with variety of talents and handicaps that predispose them to towards academic success or failure and as they move through academic institute they continue to be influenced by these factors and others that are beyond the control of educational institutions.

Family background and classroom participation:

Student's position in college and society are determined in large parts by their family background. Coleman (1996) and Jencks (1972) found that one-half to two third of student achievement variance is directly related to home variables such as socioeconomic level (Greenwood and Hickman, 1991, p. 287).

Some home environment factors that influence student achievement include social class of family, early home environment, parenting style, "type" of mother child interaction, effect of the mother working, parent involvement in school decisions and activities, family and student aspirations, and the number of children in the family (Rubin and Borgers, 1991). The more children in the family, the less time parents interact with each child.

Family and students aspirations for the future are another aspect of the influence of class, racial, or ethnic background. Parents who set high standards and have high aspirations for their children are more likely to have high-achieving children. James Coleman and colleagues found that black and white seniors had comparable aspirations; the difference was in taking the necessary steps to carry out their goals. Black students felt that they had less control over their environment and left their fate to luck and chance (coleman et al., 19666), though many lower-class black mothers find

multiple strategies to encourage their children's academic achievement (Rosier, 1993).

Educational and social class background and classroom participation:

Educational and social class background is the most important factor in determining differences between students. In fact, Jencks findings indicate that family background accounts for more than one-half of the variation other in educational attainment. Regardless of the measure used - occupation, income, parent education-family socioeconomic status is a powerful predictor of academic performance.

Children succeed in large part because of their family background and what parents do to support their children in their education. Parenting style and parental expectations play a crucial role in setting the child, educational agenda. Guidelines about after - school and weekend activities, television watching, home- work and other school- related decisions give the child structure and help the child set goals (Dornbush and Ritter 1992; lee, Dedrick and Smith, 1991). One of the most important ingredients in a child's success in school is the degree of what parental activities help or harm child's school achievement. Involvement of parents is shaped by their social financial resources, their opportunities to be involved, and their own orientation towards education.

Cultural effect on classroom participation:

Difference in cultural background does also have effect on perceptions about classroom participation. Japanese students show long silence in interpersonal

dealings and protection of face in classroom as well (Winbush 1995). Chu & Kim (1999) found that Vietnamese students prefer to be right than to initiate the discussion.

According to Chu & Kin (1990) Concept of classroom participation among Asian students is different than other students. They consider the class participation just as answering the questions not to interact actively with fellow students and to pose questions. They are reluctant to comment on fellow's presentations. They always prefer one-sided feedback from the teacher rather than from whole class critique.

Dunphy (1998) found that western universities have their own social conventions that are not familiar to overseas students. Their social conventions also include the rules for classroom participation.

Parent's involvement in