

# **Perspectives in Education For Future – Issues and Challenges**

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## **Teacher- Centered Vs Student Centered Teaching**

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### **Abstract**

Every teacher applies different approaches in their teaching and learning process. In teacher-centered approaches, judgments about appropriate areas and methods of inquiry, legitimacy of information, and what constitutes knowledge rest with the teacher. By contrast, student-centered approaches derive from constructivist views of education, in which the construction of knowledge is shared and learning is achieved through students' engagement with activities in which they are invested. In recent decades, student centered pedagogy has provided serious challenges to traditional lecture and test modes of education in colleges and universities. Advocates of student-centered pedagogy generally proceed from the constructivist position that maintains that learners construct their understandings through their actions and experiences on the world. Student-centered thinking has spawned a burgeoning interest in the use of a variety of different active learning methods in and out of the classroom. However, the theory and practice of student-centered pedagogy is not without its problems. Student centered learning is often defined in contradistinction to teacher-centered pedagogy. The idea that students must be active in the construction of knowledge is often understood to imply a diminishing role for the teacher in the learning process. The role of the teacher becomes recast as one of coach or facilitator. This paper focus on the study of comparing Teacher- centered Vs Student centered teaching. While "student-centeredness" sounds compelling, however, it is hard-pressed at times to define and accomplish it. The classroom practices are often constrained by practical considerations, such as students' expectations and experiences, and by institutional realities, such as class size, required grading criteria, and instructor training. In theoretical implications,

and teachers particularly new ones can find it quite a challenge to align classroom issues, theories of composition, and teaching strategies. The merger of practical realities and theoretical complexities tends to collapse the binary of teacher-centered/student-centered classrooms, in truth the very idea of a "centered" classroom for effective learning.

**Key words: TEACHER CENTERED, STUDENT CENTERED, LEARNING**

## **Introduction**

Higher education is an essential and integral part of the lifelong learning process. Higher education institutions operate as the lifelong learning centres making a huge impact on the development of the society, economy and culture. In traditional education system the essential elements of the study program were knowledge and teaching process. Higher Education exists to produce learning. Traditionally, the dominant paradigm is the “Teacher-Centered” style of teaching. Colleges have created complex structures to provide for the activity of teaching conceived primarily as delivering 50-minute lectures. The mission is not instruction but rather than of producing learning with every student by whatever means work best. The shift to “Student-Centered” open up wide opportunities and challenges for the teachers.

Students constitute the most central stakeholder group in higher education around the world. Over the last decade, major shifts have occurred in the size, demographic makeup, needs, aspirations, and expectations of the student population across the globe. These developments have exerted significant pressure on individual institutions and entire systems of higher education in many countries. Efforts to respond to new student realities have resulted in a wide range of institutional and systemic adjustments that have changed-and continue to change-the size, shape, and very nature of higher education. These developments, in turn, have affected the student experience of higher education, presenting students worldwide with a new and particular set of challenges and opportunities.

Student-centred learning is an approach to education focusing on the needs of the students, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers and administrators. This approach has many implications for the design of curriculum, course content, and interactivity of courses. Student-centred learning is focused on the student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning. This classroom teaching method acknowledges student voice as central to the learning experience for every learner. Student-centred learning requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning and this can be made possible mostly only in Higher education.

Educational practices such as Bloom's Taxonomy and Howard Gardner's *Theory of Multiple intelligences* also point to the importance of a student-centric learning as it promotes various modes of diverse learning styles. Bloom's taxonomy offers a promising approach for designing classroom experiences for students, experiences that promote critical thinking and constructivist approaches to learning. Bloom's taxonomy represents a tool for planning and implementing the student-centered classroom, because it gives teachers a precise language for articulating the intended outcomes of their instruction expressed in terms of student learning. It also offers instructors a tool for decoupling critical thinking skills from content, the primary emphasis of instruction in the traditional classroom. As a result, the focus of classroom instruction becomes the acquisition of student skills and competencies rather than the instructor's academic knowledge or content coverage. It can be said that creative thinking is purported through students efforts or through student-centered learning.

It helps to:

- Strengthen student motivation;
- Promotes peer-to-peer interaction thus promoting interpersonal skills too;
- Reduces disruptive behaviour and enables the student to feel confident and responsible;
- Builds student-teacher relationships;
- Promotes discovery/active learning;
- Promotes responsibility for one's own learning.

### **Levels of Bloom's Taxonomy**



Student learning outcomes expressed at various levels of Bloom's taxonomy become the foundation for the selection and design of assignments (including examinations), teaching strategies, readings, and instructional materials such as technology. Using the taxonomy,

instructors can create a detailed blueprint of a student-centered learning environment that fosters critical thinking and the process of knowledge construction. The blueprint becomes the foundation for all future planning at the course, unit, and individual lesson levels. It also facilitates the design of rewarding learning experiences for students, the identification of student learning difficulties, and the assessment of the impact of our teaching on student learning.

In the student centered classroom, the teacher is a coach and mentor, a support person who troubleshoots and problem-solves when students need such help. The students ask questions, the teacher addresses these questions as they arise. After direct instruction the students work with the materials at hand, beginning with knowledge, where the students become acquainted with the lessons' expectations and materials. After questioning themselves, each other, and the teacher they work their way through comprehension into application, bringing a student-led activity to complete fruition. In contrast, an effective student-centered, learning-oriented classroom requires different perspectives from both instructors and students. Rather than covering content, the goal of instruction becomes the intentional intellectual development of students. This involves changing the way students think and encouraging them to confront what they believe in light of facts and evidence. At the same time, students must significantly alter their view of knowledge, the role of instructors, and themselves as learners. Moving from dualism to a more sophisticated relativist perspective, students begin to understand that knowledge is context dependent and can judge the merits of ideas, information, and values based on criteria. Increasingly, they view their own role as learning to think independently and the instructors' as the facilitation of that process.

## **Teacher-Centered Vs Student-Centered**

When considering their approach to instruction, teachers are always looking for the method that is most beneficial for all of their students. Teachers want their students to enjoy the learning process, and they want the classroom to be orderly and controlled. As a result, the debate of teacher-centered vs. student-centered education has been in the forefront of educators' minds for many years. Though many people have a specific idea of which type of education is best, there are both advantages and disadvantages to each approach. Below is a description of each approach, along with some pros and cons.

### **Teacher-Centered Education**

In teacher-centered education, students put all of their focus on the teacher. The teacher talks, while the students exclusively listen. During activities, students work alone, and collaboration is discouraged.

## **Pros**

- When education is teacher-centered, the classroom remains orderly. Students are quiet, and the teacher retains full control of the classroom and its activities.
- Because students learn on their own, they learn to be independent and make their own decisions.
- Because the teacher directs all classroom activities, they don't have to worry that students will miss an important topic.

## **Cons**

- When students work alone, they don't learn to collaborate with other students, and communication skills may suffer.
- Teacher-centered instruction can get boring for students. Their minds may wander, and they may miss important facts.
- Teacher-centered instruction doesn't allow students to express themselves, ask questions and direct their own learning.

## **Student-Centered Instruction**

When a classroom operates with student-centered instruction, students and instructors share the focus. Instead of listening to the teacher exclusively, students and teachers interact equally. Group work is encouraged, and students learn to collaborate and communicate with one another.

## **Pros**

- Students learn important communicative and collaborative skills through group work.
- Students learn to direct their own learning, ask questions and complete tasks independently.
- Students are more interested in learning activities when they can interact with one another and participate actively.

### Cons

- Because students are talking, classrooms are often busy, noisy and chaotic.
- Teachers must attempt to manage all students' activities at once, which can be difficult when students are working on different stages of the same project.
- Because the teacher doesn't deliver instruction to all students at once, some students may miss important facts.
- Some students prefer to work alone, so group work can become problematic.

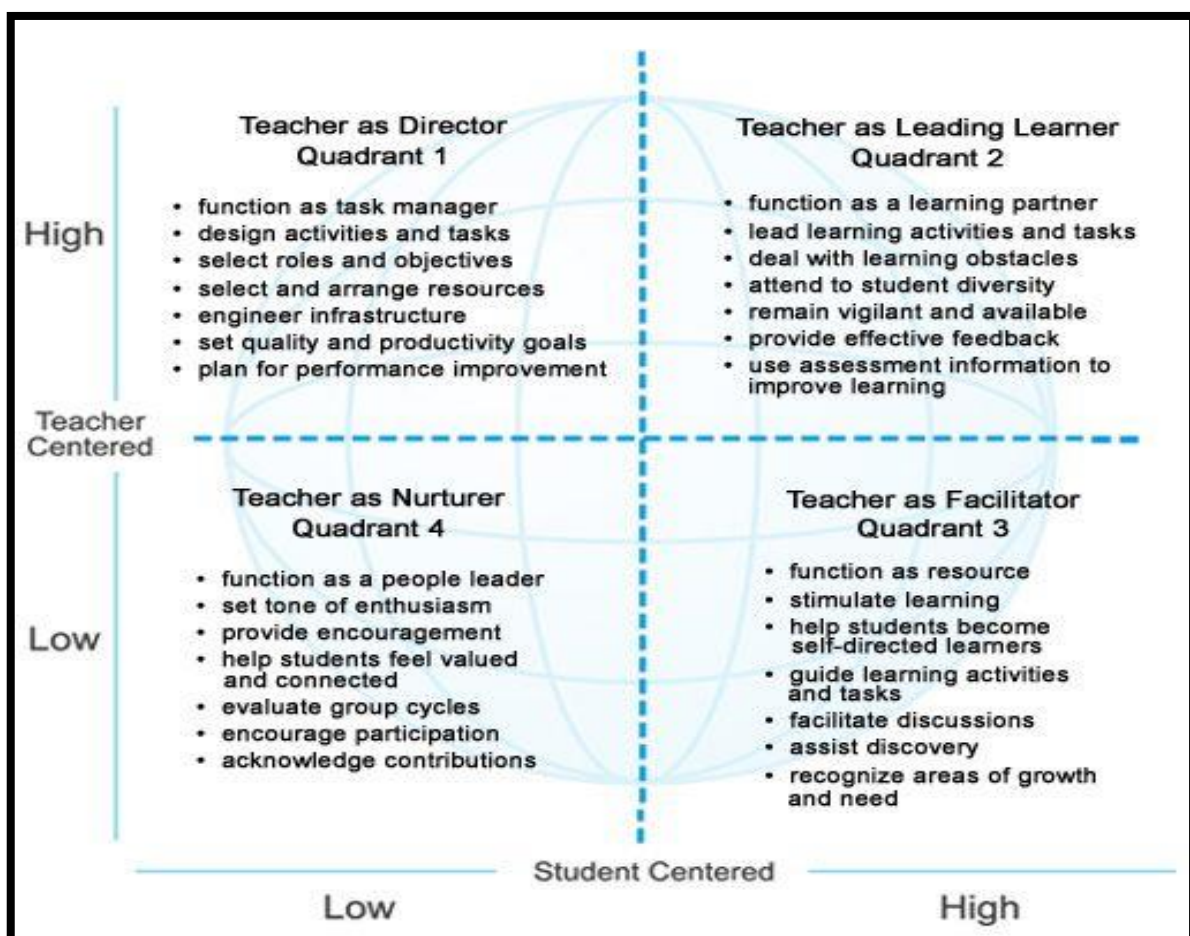
### A Look at the Differences Between Teacher-Centered and Learner-Centered Learning

TEACHER-CENTERED	LEARNER-CENTERED
Focus is on instructor	Focus is on both students and instructor
Focus is on language forms and structures (what the instructor knows about the language)	Focus is on language use in typical situations (how students will use the language)
Instructor talks; students listen	Instructor models; students interact with instructor and one another
Students work alone	Students work in pairs, in groups, or alone depending on the purpose of the activity
Instructor monitors and corrects every student utterance	Students talk without constant instructor monitoring; instructor provides feedback/correction when questions arise
Instructor answers students' questions about language	Students answer each other's questions, using instructor as an information resource
Instructor chooses topics	Students have some choice of topics
Instructor evaluates student learning	Students evaluate their own learning; instructor also evaluates
Classroom is quiet	Classroom is often noisy and busy

*Source: The National Capitol Language Resource Center (a project of the George Washington University)*

The distinction between learner- and teacher-centered pedagogy is often made with reference to the distribution of expertise and authority in the classroom. Traditional teacher-centered pedagogy is generally defined as a style in which the teacher assumes primary responsibility for the communication of knowledge to students. From this view, because teachers command greater expertise about the subject matter, they are in the best position to decide the structure and content of any given classroom experience. Teacher-centered pedagogy is usually understood to involve the use of the lecture as a primary means of communication in the classroom. The goal of the classroom involves the dissemination of a relatively fixed body of knowledge that is determined by the teacher. The lecture format is generally assumed to proceed in a unilateral fashion; the teacher elaborates upon a given body of knowledge from his or her own expert perspective rather than building the content of classroom communication around questions that students might have.

### Assessment of Teacher towards Teacher-Centered Vs Student-Centered



## **EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES-NEED FOR CHANGE**

As our educational practices change, so should our approach to teaching and learning change. Learning becomes more productive when the student is given room to inquire and set the stage for shouldering his academic success. Successful learning also occurs when learners are fully engaged in the active learning process. A further distinction from a teacher-centered classroom to that of a student-centered classroom is when the teacher acts as a facilitator. In essence, the teacher's goal in the learning process is to guide students into making new interpretations of the learning material.

In student-centered learning, in terms of curriculum practice, the student has the choice in what they want to study and how they are going to apply their newfound knowledge. According to Ernie Stringer, "Student learning processes are greatly enhanced when they participate in deciding how they may demonstrate their competence in a body of knowledge or the performance of skills." This pedagogical implication enables the student to establish his or her unique learning objectives. the teacher evaluates the learner by providing honest and timely feedback on individual progress. Building a rapport with students is an essential strategy that educators could utilize in order to gauge student growth in a student-centered classroom.

## **CONCLUSION**

Although a foundational shift from a traditional classroom, a learner-centered approach does not eliminate the teacher. A learner-centered environment facilitates a more collaborative way for students to learn. The teacher models instructions and acts as a facilitator, providing feedback and answering questions when needed. It's the student that chooses how they want to learn, why they want to learn that way and with who. Students answer each others' questions and give each other feedback, using the instructor as a resource when needed. This process is designed so that students can learn how they learn best. Taking into consideration what works for one may not work for another and at the end of the day it's not about what was taught but what was learned.

A questionnaire has been annexed at the end which can be used for understanding the inclination for or against the student-centered learning from the teachers.

## **Making a decision**



In recent years, more teachers have moved toward a student-centered approach. However, some students maintain that teacher-centered education is the more effective strategy. In most cases, it is best for teachers to use a combination of approaches to ensure that all student needs are met. When both approaches are used together, students can enjoy the positives of both types of education. Instead of getting bored with teacher-centered education or losing sight of their goals in a completely student-centered classroom, pupils can benefit from a well-balanced educational atmosphere.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

1. Which are according to your opinion the main advantages of student-centered teaching  
( 1- Very important, 2- Important, 3- Moderately important, 4- Of little importance, 5-Unimportant)

SL NO.	PROPOSITION	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Motivation of students					
2.	Possibility that students learn at their own pace					
3.	Being more focussed upon learning					
4.	Respecting different individuals					
5.	Increase of confidence					
6.	Partnership between teachers and students					
7.	More responsibility and commitment					
8.	Other (please describe)					

2. Which of the below methods do you include in your teaching  
( 1- Very frequently, 2 – frequently, 3 – occasionally, 4 – rarely, 5 – never )

SL NO.	PROPOSITION	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Problem-based learning					
2.	Individual or small group based activities					
3.	In-class discussions					
4.	Classroom workshops					

5.	Group Presentations					
6.	Projects					
7.	Solving practical problems					
8.	Cooperating in research activities					
9.	Quizzes					
10.	Use of Case study method					
11.	Use of Role Plays					
12.	Collaborative paper assignments					
13.	Web-conferencing					
14.	Other (please describe)					

3.Can you support student diversity and learning needs by ( 1– yes, 2 – no, 3 – I don't know )

SL. NO	PROPOSITION	1	2	3
1.	Offering students additional consultation/advice			
2.	Offering students individual examination terms besides the University exams			
3.	Taking some time to speak with a student who has troubles personally			
4.	Helping students who find it difficult to understand your level of language and communication			
5.	Using special support measures that help students from disadvantaged backgrounds			
6.	Other (Please pen down)			

4.How do you support students when they find teaching/learning activities difficult  
( 1- Very frequently, 2 – frequently, 3 – occasionally, 4 – rarely, 5 – never )

SL.NO	PROPOSITION	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I explain the topic again					
2.	I tell them to read additional literature					
3.	I have no time to repeat things					
4.	I am looking for new study methods					
5.	Others					

5. Which typical study materials do you introduce to support students?  
( 1- Very frequently, 2 – frequently, 3 – occasionally, 4 – rarely, 5 – never )

SL.NO	PROPOSITION	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Textbook					
2.	Additional slides					
3.	List of additional literature					

4.	Research articles					
5.	Popular scientific literature					
6.	Statistics					
7.	Others (Please describe)					

6. Which are the most frequent problems that you face when using the student-centered approach?  
( 1 – yes, 2 – no, 3 – I don't know)

SL. NO	PROPOSITION	1	2	3
1.	Syllabus that does not allow student-centered approach			
2.	No interest in the University			
3.	Lack of knowledge about student-centered learning			
4.	Study programs are not being able to change quickly			
5.	Other ( Please put down )			