

Chapter 5

Employing Active Learning and the Flipped Classroom Model in Developing Countries: Opportunities and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the discourse on the need to employ active learning and flipped classroom model in educational settings in developing countries particularly in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, this chapter examines the concept and importance of Active Learning and Flipped Classroom Model. It also reviews the efforts and readiness of educational settings for implementing these instructional approaches. The chapter also elaborates and discusses various opportunities, which surround active learning and flipped classroom model in educational settings. Additionally, the chapter illustrates primary challenges that might hinder the implementation of active Learning and Flipped Classroom Model.

INTRODUCTION

The field of education has undergone major changes, especially in the methods of learning and the relationship among the teachers and the students. For several years, the educational process was based on the teacher to instill knowledge and skills in the learners. With the developments in the means and methods of learning, as well as the evolution of the capabilities and knowledge of learners, education process became learner-centric. From this point, several scientific terms emerged such as active and flipped learning. This trend has received attention from education researchers and practitioners alike, especially in developed countries, which has assumed the lead in the field of education. Active learning and flipped learning emphasize on the investment and place the learner as an educational process axis and

Active learning and flipped learning emphasize on the investment for the learner as an educational process axis, and target class in different learning practice, here highlights the role of interest in the

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activities performed by the learner. Accordingly, the learner will be active participant, where learners do several activities related to learning process such as participating in the discussions, experimentation, and comparisons, etc., whether inside or outside the classrooms. Nowadays, active learning and flipped learning are one of the most important drivers of the educational process and are relied upon by many academics, educators and students in various educational institutions. Active learning is defined as “any instructional or teaching methods that engage learners in the learning process” (Prince, 2004: 1). On the other hand flipped learning is defined as a “pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter.” (FLN, 2014).

Active and flipped learning concepts are not new to the general field of teaching, these techniques were described as the future of learning, by many stakeholders and practitioners in developing methods and teaching strategies, where they are considered the easiest ways to employing skills or educational technology to enhance the capabilities of the learners. Many of today’s educational institutions in the globe are seeking to employ modern trends in learning, including active and flipped learning. Developing countries are not far from this trend. In Saudi Arabia, for more than eight decades of teaching experience, there is a vigorous effort to apply modern trends in learning, which in turn ensures the development of the capacities of learners and teachers alike and thus achieve effective learning outcomes. To employ such new patterns in education to enhance the learners’ capabilities in diverse educational settings, the developing countries environments need to recognize such patterns and general frameworks and mechanisms for implementation, in addition to the opportunities and challenges of the application of such modern trends, so as to keep pace with these environments counterparts environments advanced education.

POTENTIAL OF FLIPPED LEARNING

The student is the cornerstone of educational process. Thus, all the modern developments and trends in learning process revolve around him, starting with the relationship between the learners and the teachers, curricula, learning environments, tools and technical aids in the learning process. There is no doubt that the emerging trends in teaching are one of the features of the modern age, marked by characteristics and attributes, which contributed to employ those trends in the educational field, and therefore influence heavily the educational process and interested parties.

The diversity of these trends in active and flipped learning since they are applied in the field of education range from simple teaching methods and aids to the various elements and components of technical systems. The rapid revolution in various new patterns in education holds great promises and potentials for various areas including the elements in the process of use and other areas in the development phase and preparedness for use. The variety of these patterns influence areas of education process and affect social and economic aspects. The multiplicity of those patterns of learning have not developed the areas of learning for learners only, but they also, helped to develop the learners in terms of performance and behavior, and thus they can change who they are, through the continuation of this development. They can also reshape and improve the quality of education in the foreseeable future, especially in developing countries. In this sense, the emergence of such patterns in educational settings today are facts and postulates that should be employed and invested in the educational process, whatever the remarkability of the employment is, but it is increasingly entrenched in the use and impact.

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