TEACHING ECONOMICS: 
A REFLECTION ON LEARNING CENTRED APPROACH

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**ABSTRACT**

Economics is an evolving social science and is significantly related to the framing of economic policies of the nation and of the world as much as it is useful to make individual decisions relating to resource use. It is important that high schools teach this subject in a manner that is both interesting and meaningful. Students bring with them their world of knowledge and experience. These need to be formalised into concepts and theories through a variety of classroom activities. However with the overloaded syllabus and limited class room skills, teachers are left with little option but to complete syllabus in time. The 'content versus process' challenge of teaching continues .We tend to focus on our teaching skills and little on the learning skills of students . This paper uses three tools to re-examine our paradigm of teaching and attempts to direct our attention to developing Learner Centered Class Room approach. An investigation into the difficulties students face at high school learning of economics was carried out with first year degree students and the insights gained have been useful in developing the paper further.

The Subject Bench Mark Statements developed by Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) UK is helpful to know what Economics should and can teach while the familiar Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives can be used to design sessions at various levels of learning. Going through these levels of learning is not automatic. Teachers must design authentic activities in class rooms /outside to help students acquire relevant knowledge and skills. A creative teacher will provide adequate opportunities to construct knowledge and thus create active learners who are in continuous interaction with the subject. The third tool namely the Kolb Cycle of Learning drives home the point that each person is a unique mix of four important modes of learning preferences namely Concrete Experience, Observation and Reflection , Formation of Abstract Concepts and Active Experimenting. Some learners are more comfortable with one mode while others may be comfortable with yet another mode. It is important that we learn to use all modes as all of them are complementary by designing different kinds of activities for a class. Students often state that they do not make much sense of the subject and many complain that it is a dry and boring subject littered with graphs and tables. A learner centered classroom can make a difference to this experience and make them contribute, become responsible for their learning and help them discover that learning economics can be fun too. When students learn this way, they constantly seek to reconstruct their knowledge to understand emerging economic situations, and are motivated to find the answers on their own and become independent learners. The more we learn about their path of learning, the more motivated we begin to focus on their needs. This method makes teachers more creative and motivated .It is not that innovations in teaching economics are not happening among teachers. Unless teachers share their experiences, anxieties and challenges in teaching the subject and organizational changes are appropriately made, bringing about innovations in teaching economics will be a far cry. Competency building by way of training is an important part of developing and using innovative teaching strategies.
The Haphazard Load Dumper

Let me begin this paper by quoting a metaphor given by Lumsdaine, and Lumsdaine, (1995) to highlight the plight of our present teaching styles.

“A mass of young people are milling around on a large field. Piles of various building components are scattered all over the place; bricks, boards, door jambs, rolls of wire, an odd assortment of pipes- it is difficult to make sense of all these disorganised heaps. Periodically a truck drives up and haphazardly dumps another load. What is going on here? The piles of building materials are the metaphor for the basic way we deliver education to our students in this country. We package knowledge and learning into separate, self-contained units. We do not teach students to how each brick can be joined to others; we do not supply mortar, glue, and nails. We do not show them how to make connections and build a whole through working together and using the most appropriate tools. Some will discover these relationships on their own and build a beautiful edifice while still young and idealistic. Some may find the connections only later in life; some may never understand the whole when given in parts... We live in a rapidly changing world, and creative thinking helps us cope with change. We feel it is our responsibility as teachers to educate people who will be able to succeed in the high tech environment of the twenty first century. We need a framework that will encourage exploration, investigation, flexibility and play with ideas as well as promote idea synthesis and constructive judgment.”

How true. Why is that we have become this periodical ‘load dumper’? Is it because we do not know why we dump or is it that we do our job of dumping meticulously and don’t care about what happens to the dumped load? It appears that there is truth in both. The reality is that we can neither dump the load the way do now nor can we ignore what has happened to the load later. We are teachers and teaching is an interactive process which includes exchanging ideas, building knowledge, forming values and building attitudes.

Balancing Content versus Process: The Challenge

We begin this paper by examining the ‘content’ versus ‘process’ debate of teaching. We need to discuss why process and not content alone, should be emphasised in social science teaching. Teachers who love their subject often believe that the best way to improve their teaching is by developing their content or knowledge level. The outcome of such a belief is that their
knowledge level improves, but they have not developed sophisticated teaching skills. Another way to understand this problem is we tend to focus on our teaching skills and little on the learning skills of students. We assume that good teaching will automatically ensure good learning and therefore we have been focusing on improving teaching skills and ignoring learning skills.

This raises a few important questions. Who has control over learning— the teacher or the student? What is the role of the syllabus given to us to teach, is it to ‘cover’ the syllabus in a given period of time or is it a tool for us to help students develop learning skills and help them acquire knowledge in the subject? The quality and quantum of the syllabus and the knowledge level of the teacher matters. When syllabus is over loaded or pitched at a level of abstraction which a student may not reach with their level of experience, teachers do not have much choice but to complete the syllabus somehow which is rather unfortunate. This will result in simple memorizing content for exams.

Another important question is does the student have any role in learning at all other than memorizing some material given to them or do they have the opportunity to practice and test their learning skills. And the last question raised is what is the purpose of evaluation? Is it to see how much a student could effectively memorize and reproduce or is it to test if the student has been able to construct knowledge on given areas on their own? My experience is that a shift in our paradigms from being a ‘teacher centric’ teacher to being a ‘learner centric’ teacher can make some difference and put some life into our education system, though I am equally concerned about the quality and quantum of the syllabus. As an educator, I shall share my experiences in teaching economics as a social science to college students both at the undergraduate and post graduate level and conceptualize them by relating it to the “learner-centered” model.

**Some Findings from Students**

I have collected data from seventeen first year Economics students in our college who have done a course in Economics from CBSE board from different schools both in Bangalore and in other parts of the country. They responded to a set of questions relating to difficulties in learning economics. Response to open-ended statements has provided insights into the needs of students at the high school level. Some of them are presented below.
All of them said they liked the subject as they found that whatever they knew, it related to real life. However, by the time the course was nearing completion, they dreaded the subject as they took the subject rather lightly when it was done in class. Some of them even said they had to take tuition in the subject in order to clear the paper. Now they feel that the subject should have been taught in an interesting manner and they would have enjoyed it.

One of the difficulties relates to the course being done in a disorderly manner ie topics were not taken in a sequenced manner and hence they had difficulty in relating one topic to another. This leads to the point that it is better that only one teacher takes the subject as far as possible and that the sequence developed in the syllabus is not diluted. The preparation of syllabus itself should be carefully done so that such mismatch can be avoided. A regular quick revision about topics done, not to clarify doubts but to re-emphasise the interconnectedness each time helps them relate to the subject better.

Another area where students have felt difficulty was with regard to teachers getting confused with topics when asked for clarification. Students stated that often the economics classes land up as reading from textbooks or giving notes to keep class in order as most of the time classes were conducted in a disturbed atmosphere. It is clear that unless the classroom pedagogy focuses on learning centric methods this problem of managing classes will continue. Teacher’s effort in being thorough with the syllabus is very important and piece by piece preparation will only create confusions and indiscipline in class.

The approach to teaching how and why of the use of tables and graphs in economics was more of drawing class as one student said it was a class of cross words! A rather boring and frightening experience, as they could not find much meaning as to why these are used. So they landed up memorizing them for the sake of exams and could not justify its existence in the syllabus. This indicates that a different methodology in introducing and teaching tables and graphs need to be tried out. Student involvement is of great importance. These findings can in no way be generalized but they do provide insights into the difficulties that students and teacher face in teaching and learning economics at high school level.

Let me first begin by examining what it that Economics should teach a high school student. To understand this, I shall use the Subject Bench Mark Statements for Economics.
WHAT SHOULD ECONOMICS TEACH: SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENTS

Economics is an evolving social science and is significantly related to the framing of economic policies of the nation and of the world. It is a life related discipline and it studies how people and nations are engaged in creating wealth, using it for increasing their welfare, how they learn to manage scarce resources and how wealth grows over time. It means there is much learning and unlearning taking place almost every day. The problem of the housewife deciding the next meal based on the resources available at home, young person’s deciding which college or course they would like to take up keeping in mind what returns they are likely to reap in the future, a young person deciding when to enter the labour market and on what terms, cost of deciding on getting married, planning retirement are all related to economics. Gary Becker even explained marriage and divorce in terms of Economics! Economics cannot be tested and taught like physical sciences. It is about human beings who are considered rational most of the time but irrational quite often as well. It not only explains but also suggests. Therefore teaching the subject too should keep in mind such intricacies to make the subject interesting and useful.

The question is what should Economics teach a young learner. Obviously the subject should impart training in the principles of economics, its application to different life situations and finally help the student in understanding the basics of national economic environment, because it will affect their lives as well. The subject taught at high school level has yet another important function ie of getting students interested in Economics and nurturing a desire in them to pursue the subject at higher levels of education.

What should economics teach is best understood by getting familiar with Subject Benchmark Statements. As teachers, when we know what we want our students to gain after a lecture and a course, we become more effective. It is important that we ‘begin with the end in mind’ while teaching. Subject benchmark statements are useful tools to meet this end. Subject benchmark statement of Economics is developed under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) UK. QAA describes benchmark statements as providing a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programmes in a specific subject. These benchmark statements are useful to prepare a curriculum, teaching and testing methodologies. Though these benchmark statements have been made for higher education, yet they can be useful to the high school level of teaching as well. Teachers could do well to go
through these statements for a better understanding of the purpose of Economics education by visiting the following web site, since it may not be possible to detail them here. 
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/statements/Economics.asp
http://ecedweb.unomaha.edu/standards/9-12standards.htm#12.4.18

Some of the important elements of subject benchmarking in economics include **Key Intellectual Features of an Economist's Approach.** It is a set of key intellectual features an economist should have in terms of approach to the subject. This includes ability to abstract and simplify economic realities, both deductively and inductively which is relevant to high school students as well. The ability to analyse and reason an economic problem, ability to marshal evidence, to assimilate, structure, and analyse qualitative and quantitative data can be taught at all levels. Besides these elements, the statements also highlight that economics can teach certain transferable skills ie skills that can be useful in other disciplines and life in general.

Another reason for this ‘burdened’ discipline is also partly due the overloaded syllabus which kills the creativity and time available to the teachers to make the subject interesting. The evaluation system too do not often evaluate students at higher levels of learning. Making a large syllabus need not necessarily improve the quality of student learning economics nor should we believe that all that is needed for an economists to know should be taught to high schools students! It is meaningful if the content of the syllabus is kept well within the experience and abstraction level of students. Too general and wide areas of study defeat the purpose of teaching economics itself at this level. Therefore becoming clear about what we want of teaching economics is the sure way to make the course interesting and meaningful to the beginners.

However when I talk about interest in economics to students who join college, most of them say that they do not make much sense of it and many complain that it is a dry and boring subject littered with graphs and tables! Since statistics is included in the economics syllabus, a typical first year economics student reels out mean, median , mode and such other statistical concepts as economics which leaves college teachers aghast! Some think it was history because they share about life in society. Rarely do they know for e.g. that the concept of margin is a decision making point or that their mobile service providers belong to the oligopoly market or why nations trade with one another. Some say since question answers are given, they can easily memorize them and write an examination .It is important as teachers to know that we are
responsible for this unfortunate outcome as our syllabus is overloaded and teaching pedagogy is often ‘teacher centric’. It is here we need to make a paradigm shift in our teaching pedagogy from being ‘teacher centric’ to being ‘learner centric’. I am purposefully ignoring the issues relating to the need to revamp the syllabus because it is outside the purview of this paper. I am assuming that the available syllabus is good to work with and so I now focus on some risk taking in teaching by shifting to learner centered pedagogy.

**LEARNING CENTRIC PEDAGOGY**

To understand learning centric pedagogy, this presentation attempts to use the Kolb cycle of learning. The Kolb Cycle of learning sets the background for ‘learner centric’ teaching. Learner centric teaching focuses on how the student is learning rather than effective delivery. Keeping the class in pin drop silence is often viewed as being the quality of a good teacher. This can happen more out of the power structure rather than out of students engagement in learning. The more we learn about their path of learning the more motivated we become to focus on their needs. This method makes us teachers more creative and motivated.

What constitutes good teaching? The first area of focus of course should be to get ourselves knowledgeable about our subject as a whole and not in parts, ie not getting ready for every day class in pieces. This gives confidence to the teacher and makes designing of different activities interesting. Having done our part of the job we shall now understand Kolb’s cycle of learning.

**Kolb Cycle of Learning**

David A. Kolb\(^1\) (with Roger Fry) created his famous model out of *Four Elements: Concrete Experience, Observation and Reflection, the Formation of Abstract Concepts and Experimenting*. Kolb and Fry (1975) argue that the learning cycle can begin at any one of the four points - and that it should really be approached as a continuous spiral. Concrete Experience leads to Reflective Observation on that experience, followed by the development of theory through Abstract Conceptualization. The theory is then tested by Active Experimentation that generates new experiences. David Kolb's work can be traced back to that famous dictum of Confucius around 450 BC: "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand."

\(^1\) [http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-explrn.htm](http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-explrn.htm)

\(^3\) [http://www.learningfromexperience.com](http://www.learningfromexperience.com)
Kolb’s cycle gives us insights into drawing the attention of students in a class at different points of learning and guides them through the others. Since learning begins in people at different points of the cycle, teaching should be flexible and be able to dwell at all points. It is presented in the popular picture given below.

![Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle](source:www.med-ed-online.org/f0000010.htm)

The cycle presented above can be explained as consisting of four different learning points (Lumsdaine and Lumsdaine(1995).

A. **Concrete Experience –feeling (CE)** learners learn most effectively when they can be immersed in a learning experience, and when they can learn from feelings or reactions to experiences. Teachers will have to explain with ‘meaning’ and ‘why’ of the material to teach. Students who learn using this style will do well to do work when they get assignments to do which will demand them to go to the market, bus stations or the like and learn about India being overpopulated or what do people do in markets when they are bargaining with vegetable vendors or why people migrate from rural to urban areas for example. This develops skills of observation and abstraction. They learn by asking questions, enjoy brainstorming, discussions and enjoy relationships.

B. Those who prefer **Abstract Conceptualization- analytical thinking (AC)** are more rational and logical in their approach and prefer to learn from thinking or analyzing problems in a systematic method. These students are good when they are taught theories and concepts and like
new terms and arrangement of ideas. To this set of learners, applying a formula to an idea is interesting. They like to play with new ideas, concepts, and models. They prefer intellectual achievements, to team work and social interactions. Such students do well with the traditional teaching style with lectures and text books and look to teachers for “what’ questions.

C. Individuals with Reflective Observation –watching(RO) style view situations from multiple perspectives and prefer to watch and listen. They are good listeners, work and learn well in groups. They are patient, objective and depend on own thoughts and feelings to form opinions. They use both abstract knowledge and common sense. They like to test theories and believe that if something works then use it. School and regular class rooms can be quite frustrating for them, since they cannot apply what they have learnt. Teachers must emphasise the ‘how’ and demonstrate the usefulness of the material taught. Field trips are interesting for such students.

D. Those who learn by Active Experimentation –doing (AE) prefer learning by doing and often provide answers intuitively. They are restless in class and class can be boring. Teachers can support these students’ interests by asking ‘what if’ type of questions, giving them independent learning projects rather than routine assignments. These students for example like to develop tables and try drawing graphs on their own.

Each person is a unique mix of these modes of learning preferences. Some learners are more comfortable with one mode while others may be comfortable with yet another mode. However to fully understand a problem, it is important that we learn to use all modes as all of them are complementary. A class thus presumably has all four types of learners and it is a challenge for teachers to attend to all type of learners, more so when the teacher’s learning styles itself may be dominant of a particular type and she may not be aware of it herself.

What can be done on a more regular basis is to first introduce the subject in a complete manner using different interactive activities. Once they are motivated then the teacher can go to share her expert knowledge in a well organized manner, guide students to reading. The next step would be to help them to apply what they have learnt. Class discussion can be useful here. The next stage is that of helping them discover something new. Field trips, report writing, problem solving can be useful. Now it may not be possible for a teacher to engage in all levels of learning at all times, but what can be done is to develop their interest in different forms of learning and then motivate them to interact with others to try out what they want. This will keep them engaged and
motivated to learn. To keep the class engaged and interested, it is important for the teacher to practice ‘learning centred’ pedagogy in class rooms.

THE PARADIGM OF ‘LEARNER CENTRED’ CLASS ROOMS

In the traditional teacher centric class rooms, the teacher is the ‘know all’ of the subject and the students are at the receiving end. The main aim is to deliver knowledge and the learner is treated as an object. The growing dissatisfaction with traditional approaches based on this notion of transmitting a predetermined body of knowledge however now has alternative –the paradigm of learner centeredness. Students become the centre of activity in the class room. Learner-centered learning helps learners develop understanding of class room dynamics and taking responsibilities of their own learning. The content is used as a tool for learning while the processes in the class room helps in learning. The traditional teacher now will have to adorn a new role, she is no longer the powerful authority who will decide how students will learn but embark on a collaborative exploration of knowledge, sharing in the joy of discovery and the satisfaction of using new skills and ideas. The teacher can invoke different learning strategies among students. Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes in learners. Students come with several experiences and knowledge of their own. This needs to be conceptualized in a class room.

We need to ask what the student knows about a topic, albeit in an informal manner. For example when we teach poverty or unemployment what information does this student comes with to the class, which can be developed further into seasonal unemployment, under employment and so on. How will they define poverty? Can they understand the process of industrialization without calling from their knowledge of the industries they know? It will be interesting for them to collect some names of industries, what they produce and how it is linked to their daily life- bus, railways, and soaps and so on. Then ask them how these industries create jobs. Then ask them if these industries can produce all what our country wants. How do we solve this problem? From whom shall we get them? How can we get them? Understanding implications of globalization in terms of livelihood patterns, for a tenth standard student is indeed too abstract. Instead they could do well to know why countries trade for example. Engaging students at levels which uses their observation skills and experiences is meaningful.
Learners must be given chances repeatedly during their class time and outside to discover and transform complex information into concepts. This will make them curious to observe and abstract. Such learning centered class rooms help develop self regulated learners who learn a variety of learning skills and know how and when to use them. They have an active role in learning rather than being just receiving information from the teacher. Students are encouraged to learn by integrating their reality with content. This learner centered methods enhance participation in class.

Starting a class with brain storming is a good way to get students involved. They can write responses to a question and then share among themselves or to come and write on the board. There should be suspension of judgment at this stage. Allow time for reflection and ask them which of the ones written is correct and why and now present in the form of a flow chart, a diagram or table and the like. Later the matter can be arranged in an order by the teacher and during the next class, teacher can now use lecture method, ask questions and provide or seek examples. Several subjects like migration, poverty, industrialization, development, hunger, child labour can be introduced this way.

Now if we examine the learning process, students have contributed something to the class, since no judgment is made, they will feel motivated to read, ask, talk about this new topic. They get interested and want to learn more. The flip side of this method is that the class gets a little noisy, but who ever said that a quiet class is a learning class! Sooner they learn to control their interaction because the teacher is skilled in effective class room management.

Sometimes giving a topic to a group is beneficial because they learn to talk economics when the group work is guided. This exercise enables them to work in groups, develop communication in terms of using the vocabulary of economics and learn to integrate various theories and concepts of economics. One can use role-play cases with several facts and concepts to work through. For example to teach working of market mechanism, the circular flow of income, discussing the subject of returns to scale where a case is given as to how to solve the problem of serving all the waiting customers in a hotel in the near future and so on. Sometimes the use of such simple case study serves multiple subject needs and requires all students in the group to use their specific learning style. Ask the groups to make presentations about their groups decisions. The teacher can then explain the concept of scale, all factors being variable.
At other times give sufficient background of the topic, give examples, refer to newspapers and news clips from television channels which in some ways will encourage students to read and watch useful programs on TV. At other times ask students after giving some background to develop some table like that of a demand curve or relevance of margin in consumption, or give examples of fixed cost and variable costs and then convert them into diagrams. Experience shows that they quite enjoy doing this though at the beginning they need to be guided about a graph, usefulness of a graph, how to draw a graph and so on. Soon they understand that graphs use the same logic applied in the table or in the concept and they become quite easy with learning to draw graphs and understanding tables. At other times giving them an incomplete table and asking them to complete after teaching them the concept involved makes class interesting. After the individual work of drawing the diagram in their notebook, any one could go to the board and draw it. Others can join to correct it or add to it. And some one could come to explain it. Thus the diagram instead of being taught by the teacher is well understood by the students as they enjoy doing it on their own and can also assess their own level of achievement as they progress. They feel that the subject is in their control and diagrams do not need to be memorised any more. They discover that there is logic to it. Finally the teacher explains the entire table, diagram and the lesson once again. Some students do still need help in understanding a concept or lesson. This work is undertaken by those who could understand the topic well and becomes the peer tutor during the class itself. The advanced learner also finds that he/she is also motivated, challenged and recognised. And this also enables the weaker student to get individual attention. Otherwise in a teacher centric method this would have been done using the lecture method and relying too much on it divorces reality from theories for young learners.

Sometimes students can be given topics to be worked in groups by using charts, models and other forms of visuals which can then be exhibited. After the presentation, questions are asked and if the group is unable to answer them, the teacher steps in. They can share their experiences of having undertaken the study. They invariably state that the work has been very challenging. This is empowering, as they are capable of carrying out independent academic work, work in effective teams, undertake risks and are responsible for their learning. The use of class presentations by students have shown that they have to work independently, get their thoughts
clear and put it down in a systematic manner. The students are motivated because the presentation is in front of a class, they know they will be assessed by the teacher and students. Interestingly they clearly recall the details and contents of their presentations during evaluation. Giving a chance to other learners to ask questions to clear doubts or add to something already presented involves other learners as well. The only disadvantage is that it is time consuming and the class tends to become noisy. However it is worth all this especially when students are enjoying learning economics through a participative learning process.

Assignment writing is especially useful to develop writing and library skills. Assignments that are not from text books, presentations of new experiences by students, critical discussion of current topics in groups inculeate interest in the subject. A variety of topics to choose from for the class can be given, of course with adequate guidance to write both text with word limit and bibliography. Otherwise students tend to copy from internet or books. This helps in developing intellectual honesty. Submitting within a deadline is of immense importance.

Encouraging students to observe situations of real life is one of the most important skills that an economist learns and uses. Ask for example, why are shops selling clothes or watches located close to each other. Students should be able to observe these phenomena and then question it. This could leave students quite confused in the early stages of learning as to why it happens. However guided work of this nature can generate interest in economics. Encouraging observing, recognizing, and perceiving reality can help students establish interconnections which is an important skill in Economics. These interconnections are complex and often hidden from view and only an analytical mind can unearth them.

Some relationships are mere conventions like the equilibrium between demand and supply but these conventions help a student to understand that all convention need not be right always either. Can such convention help in predictions, can they fail? Markets do fail! Why is that no one is able to do anything to stop others from throwing garbage on the road or release smoke into the atmosphere. This will help students develop independent thinking and allow them to reach their own judgments and think of solutions to everyday problems. Otherwise the subject becomes yet another subject having graphs and tables which they do not find meaning in learning. Economics is one of the few subjects that can be taught in different modes namely
verbally or descriptive, graphically, mathematically, numerically, and with statistics. All these can be achieved when the teaching learning process undergoes change.

Going through these levels of learning is not automatic. Teachers must design authentic activities in class rooms /outside to help students acquire relevant skills. The educator’s task is to create adequate opportunities to construct knowledge. A creative teacher will create active learners who are in continuous dialogue with the student. Feeding with notes every day during class is just self defeating. Truth in this case is delivered and not discovered by students. Students should learn to become self learners. Teacher becomes facilitators of learning and not one pouring out what they know. Another famous tool that can be revisited in high school education is that of Bloom’s Taxonomy of educational objectives.

C. BLOOMS TAXONOMY

Training in Blooms taxonomy of educational objectives (1964) is still the best guide to help develop different teaching methodologies. It is set of six level thinking skills-knowledge, comprehension application, analysis, and synthesis and evaluation or judgement. It is particularly useful in teaching and assessment. This resource also helps in integrated teaching. The affective domain can be well addressed with the help of several topics in economics, especially from development economics. A more detailed reading may be necessary to use them in framing learning centred activities for class. (http://www.humboldt.edu/~tha1/bloomtax.html)

ROAD AHEAD

Innovations in teaching economics are happening for the academically motivated teachers all the time. They keep themselves abreast with the developments taking place in the subject and are thus upto date. However this may not be the state of several others. Several teachers may not even be aware of the recent developments in economics and many may not be thorough with the required level of knowledge itself. If economics is taught like teaching history or statistics for example, we cannot expect outcomes that are worth sharing. This is true because each subject has a style of teaching which is related to its level of fineness. Unless teachers share their experiences, anxieties and challenges in teaching the subject with peer, bringing about innovations in teaching economics will be a far cry. It is here that some effective organisational changes can be brought about. Providing opportunities for such interactions for teachers in the

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form of workshops rather than seminars will be useful. Resource persons from the fraternity of economics at the school and college level can guide through such work. The Course organization, course goals and objectives should be arrived at which puts some pressure on teachers to improve their standards at the same time they also get equipped with the changes. Methodologies can thus include lecture, discussion leading, active learning strategies, collaborative learning, case studies and the like suiting the needs and abilities of the teachers. Appropriate methodologies be developed keeping in mind the student characteristics, academic freedom, content issues, and practical teaching problems .These changes should be incorporated in the assessment of students using multiple methods. Thus competency building by way of training is an important part of developing and using innovative teaching strategies.

CONCLUSION
Teaching economics can be satisfying when the teacher and the learner is engaged at learning levels where motivation to learn the subject comes from the subject itself rather than from other external sources. Thus when a teacher can effectively take a student go through different levels of learning, then it is possible to attain the objectives mentioned in the subject benchmark statements. When students learn this way, they constantly seek to reconstruct their knowledge to understand emerging economic situations, and are motivated to find the answers on their own and become independent learners. They will be able to visualize their own intellectual need, develop effective learning strategies, and will not find themselves confused. They will discover that human beings and their interactions are one of the most mysterious activities which can be unraveled only by constant truth seeking. Teacher’s role is to motivate, support and be able to make students personally responsible for learning. This is in the true sense is the teaching and learning of social sciences especially economics.

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