

# **EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF COMMERCE**

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Before we discuss the effective teaching of commerce, let's have a brief background about the evolution of commerce in India.

Indian society during the Vedic period was divided into four basic castes viz. the Brahmins, the Kshatriya, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. In such a set up, commerce was entirely the monopoly of the Vaishyas. The younger generation of Vaishyas was educated about business by their elders. With the passage of time Vaishyas accepted other professions and so did people of other castes, who entered into the commercial domain. This entry of people with different backgrounds into the area of business without relevant knowledge and experience, led to the need of imparting formal education of commerce and business. Formal commerce education was first introduced in India in 1886 at Madras by the Trustees of Pachaiappa's Charities in the form of a commercial school.

As a branch of knowledge, Commerce imparts experience of business world at large in all its manifestations. It prepares its learners for personally fruitful and socially desirable careers in the field of business.

*Chesseman* (1904) defined Commerce Education As: "Commerce education is that form of instruction which both directly and indirectly prepare the business man for his calling."

*Fredrik G. Nichols* defined Commerce Education As: "Commerce education is a type of training which, while playing its part in the achievement of the general aims of education of any given level, has for its primary objective the preparation of people to enter upon a business career, or having entered upon such a career, to render more efficient service therein and to advance from their present levels of employment to higher levels."

From these definitions we can easily conclude that it is helpful in ones life as well as vocation.

During the post independence era, commerce education has emerged as one of the most potential pursuits in the wake of industrialisation. Most of the Education Commissions constituted in post independence India to explore higher education have undoubtedly held that the commerce education is primarily meant for providing the students in-depth knowledge of different functional areas of business so as to prepare people required by the community for the purposes of trade, commerce and industry.

Commercial activity is present in almost every day-to-day activity that takes place in our environment. Formal courses at schools and colleges are only systematic, scholarly presentations/records of the experience.

The focus of this paper is on effective teaching of commerce but before that we should be clear about what do we mean by effective teaching.

## **EFFECTIVE TEACHING**

Education is a social science that encompasses teaching and learning specific knowledge, beliefs, skills, perceptions and attitudes. Teachers use a variety of methods and materials in order to impart a curriculum effectively.

Before we discuss effective teaching lets' be clear about some of the premises of teaching. There is no one right teaching style. One's teaching style is an extension of one's personality. Thus some techniques will appeal to one more than to others. Teaching may appear easier and "more natural" for some than to others, but there are no "born teachers" who don't need to improve or others who can never improve regardless of effort. Good teachers work at being good and are constantly looking for ways to improve. Not all techniques are effective in every setting, in every situation of the same setting, and with every group. A new approach should not be tried only because it is new, nor rejected for the same reason.

Effective teaching is characterised by the use of variety of methods which have been carefully chosen to match course objectives and contexts for learning and which encourage pupil participation and motivation. A good balance between practical activity and other ways of learning is a key feature of good schools and colleges. Fresh approaches to the teaching of practical skills, with more emphasis on group work than on class activity, are improving the effectiveness of learning. Technological activity is also prominent within all courses at all stages. It is being used increasingly as an appropriate vehicle to develop knowledge and understanding. For teaching effectively teachers have to adapt approaches and resources to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

In planning approaches to teaching and learning, teachers have to ensure, not only that the content is appropriately covered, but also that there will be balanced development of knowledge, understanding and skills. It is good practice to use a variety of methods so that pupils' interest and motivation are maintained and individual preferences for different learning styles are considered.

The most effective teaching involves the careful selection of approaches to match course objectives and the context for learning.

## **EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF COMMERCE**

For teaching any subject effectively first of all teacher should be clear about its general as well as specific objectives of each topic/concepts because this will only help the teacher in selecting the appropriate approach and method of teaching according to the content. So for teaching commerce effectively teacher has to be thorough with the objectives of teaching commerce at all levels.

Effective teaching can be possible only when the teacher is able to *promote interest* among the students. For promoting the interest among the students a teacher can do various things such as demonstrate interest in the subject and in teaching, introducing the topics in new and interesting ways, point out

practical applications and interesting examples, relating the subject matter to current events and students interest or activities, presenting challenging and thought provoking ideas, examining controversial issues, encouraging new ideas from the students and by the use of varied activities, media, and methods. It also helps in providing practical exposure to the students.

The quality of instruction also depends upon the knowledge of teachers. There is a strong positive relationship between teachers' knowledge of subjects and levels of subject knowledge achieved by their students. Teachers with ample knowledge of subjects are able to plan effectively for the introduction and organization of basic concepts. Knowledgeable teachers are also able to distinguish simple from complex concepts and to vary instructional procedures accordingly. So for teaching any subject effectively, there should be a trained and qualified teacher. Its is more necessary for commerce teaching because the subject is offered at the higher secondary level where the students are more matured, so there has to be a teacher who is masters in commerce at the same time having a degree of education.

Commerce is a subject which is very close to us, so for effective teaching of commerce it is all about listening, questioning, being responsive, and remembering that each student and class is different. For this teacher should adopt *Socratic instruction* approach. It's all about eliciting responses and developing the oral communication skills of the quiet students. It's all about pushing students to excel which is basic requirement of commerce teaching.

For teaching effectively, teacher has to select *appropriate instructional method*. But we have to keep in mind that no one instructional method is the best for all subject/content. Learning can be enhanced by adopting different approach and method according to the need of the content. Commerce is such a subject where a teacher can use all the methods effectively such as lecture, discussion, role playing, seminar, supervised as well as independent study, project method, field trip, etc. but one of the major concern is that teacher should use these methods in actual class room teaching. Commerce subject is of vocational based so the activity method is quite suitable for

commerce. In the words of Rousseau, "Instead of making the child stick to books keep him busy in workshop where his hands will work to the profit of his mind." Thus learning by doing, by activity and experience is the first and the most natural form of learning. One of the arguments against using these methods is that they consume more time but if we use different methods according to the needs of the content then it will help in achieving HOTS at the same time they are not at all time consuming. For example if you field trip as a method for teaching banking it will consume at the most two-three hours to take students to the nearby bank and observe the functions of the employees of the bank and then the teacher can just discuss about the observations of the students in the class room and with this the chapter will be over. This will also help in retention of knowledge for longer period. This is also one of the ways to facilitate learning i.e. relating the curriculum to the student's lifestyles.

Effective teaching is nothing but helping students to learn and for this teacher has to foster a *good learning atmosphere*. This can be done if the teacher is ready with a flexible teaching plan in mind, is positive towards learners, and is confident. At the same time teacher should not be arrogant.

Teaching of commerce can be made more effective by *relating the subject/content with the daily life* of the students and commerce is such a subject which can be related with the daily life of the students by giving examples, by adopting project based learning method.

Effective teaching is not only concerned with teaching effectively but it is also concerned with how quickly and well a student learns that depends not only on the intelligence and prior knowledge of the students but also on the students *learning styles*. Visual learners gain knowledge best by seeing or reading what a teacher is trying to teach; auditory learners, by listening; and tactile or psychomotor learners, by doing. A teacher can improve the chances of teaching success if he assesses the learning style of his students, then plans teaching activities and uses teaching tools appropriate to that style.

Even effective use of traditional teaching techniques can be enhanced by the use of *teaching aids* (audio-visual resources). To some extent teaching aids help in removing the gap between teaching styles of teachers and learning styles of the learners. It is more applicable for commerce teaching because commerce is such a subject which is close to the student's real life so it is possible for a teacher to use maximum number of teaching aids.

Right from the beginning we are saying that commerce is a practical subject as well as related to real life, so for teaching it effectively we should encourage *students' participation*. For students participation teacher should provide opportunity to students to ask questions, answer questions in a meaningful way, offer challenging and thought provoking ideas, plan interactive activities, show approval for students' ideas, incorporate student's ideas into lessons, and ask students whether they have understood the concept before proceeding.

Teaching can also become effective when teacher gives *clear explanations* for the concepts by using concrete, real life and relevant examples. Explanations can also be enriched by using illustrations graphs, diagrams appropriately. A teacher can also suggest mnemonic aids for memorizing complicated ideas. At the same time a teacher should define unfamiliar terms and he should write key terms on the blackboard. Teacher should repeat difficult ideas in diverse ways. While explaining difficult and important ideas teacher should speak slowly and he should ask if students understood before proceeding further. While explaining a teacher should be conscious about the pace of delivering the lecture at the same time he should be audible to the class. His Pronunciation should be clear to the students and he should modulate his voice so that monotony can be removed.

Effectiveness of teaching also depends on how well it is *planned and organized*. At the same time teacher should demonstrate how ideas in specific lessons fit into the course as a whole and relate class material to other parts of the course.

While teaching, teacher should also remember the *maxims of teachings* i.e. proceed from simple to complex, from concrete to the abstract, from particular to general, from analysis to synthesis, from empirical to rational, from psychological to logical, from the indefinite to definite. These maxims of teaching are very important for teaching any subject especially commerce because this subject is taught at higher secondary level where we have grownup students.

Effective teaching is also about *style*. It should be entertaining. So teacher should incorporate humor in the teaching but there is a word of caution that it should not be at the cost of the students.

Commerce is such a subject which is related to *current situations*, so a commerce teacher should keep himself up-to-date, so while teaching he should talk about current developments and relate the subjects to current events and other fields, at the same time he should provide insights or knowledge beyond the text.

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