

Education for the knowledge society

Technological distractions V Motivational factors

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate demands for motivational factor in a classroom environment which has been polluted by increasing distraction caused by the recent technological developments. It is evidently proved that motivations of students are quite important to enhance their learning in the classroom. Some of these factors relates to the extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. The extrinsic motivational factors are treated more in this study.

However, the recent technological developments and their new learning environment have also influence on learning of students. According to a survey more than nine out of ten British students are distracted by Face book, Twitter and other social networking sites at least once an hour. As part of motivational factors, rewards are more productive and efficient then punishments in classroom environment. For the good and betterment of teachers and students, educational institutions should start to put into practice “laptop ban” and “smart phone ban” or permits.

In this paper comparative studies are considered to dig out findings related to technological distractions V motivational factors.

This paper analyzes the distractions caused by the recent technological development in the classroom environment. The finding of this paper indicates that banning is not a good option for motivation of the students. It suggests that there should be a balance between banning and freeing the usages of the recent developed technologies.

In short, it is regarded to conduct a controlling mechanism which can help students how to handle and balance technology use in educational institutions. If students aim for high paying jobs, during the lesson they need to switch off their laptop and smart phones for better future.

Key terms: motivation, distraction, technology, social media, educational institution, extrinsic, intrinsic

Questions:

Technological distractions V Motivational factors

Way of delivery: Comparative Studies

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Result

Demands for Motivational Factors V Increasing Distractions in a Classroom Introduction

This study aims to investigate demands for motivational factor in a classroom environment which has been polluted by increasing distraction caused by the recent technological developments. It is evidently proved that motivations of students are quite important to enhance their learning in the classroom. Some of these factors relates to the extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. The extrinsic motivational factors are treated more in this study.

However, the recent technological developments and their new learning environment have also influence on learning of students. According to a survey ‘more than nine out of ten British students are distracted by Face book, Twitter and other social networking sites at least once an hour’ (Warman, 2011).

This study initially will investigate factors of motivations which have been stated in the above. Then the study will analyse the distractions caused by the recent technological development in the classroom environment.

These two important aspects of factors which have direct impact to education will be compared. Finally a conclusion will be drawn from this paper.

Factors of Motivations

There are various motivational factors that have been used in order to motivate students for many years. It is clear that the scope of paper prevents us not to investigate all of these. However, the study consider motivational factors namely, they are extrinsic and intrinsic motivations.

Among them, intrinsic motivations become more important in education; because of individual interest, enjoyment and satisfaction of human being. Further, some states that extrinsic motivations are also quite important. Hence the attainment of rewards such as money, prizes, and other benefits or intangible rewards such as social approval, a sense of worthiness, and a sense of conscientiousness and also the avoidance of tangible and intangible punishments such as time-out, scolding, rejection and a sense of low self-worth (Avi Kaplan. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation). Intrinsically and extrinsically motivation depends on personality and self-concept. Students are intrinsically motivated, when they seek personal success, competency, development, excitement and have fun. For example, they like to write a story for fun of learning, curiosity and sharing experience. In fact, it excites them, makes them feel better or relieves their stress and helps them improve their personal time. Hence, they are intrinsically motivated. They are extrinsically motivated, when they learn, behave and achieve as a result of highly regarded outcome. For example, if they like grades, money, medals, discount of school fee and trophies. Actually, all are extrinsic motivators. (Novella Thompson, November 21, 2011). Related to extrinsic motivation and behaviour, B. F. Skinner an American educator utilized rats and pigeons; He sought to find out that human behaviour is based upon the key concept of reward. According to this experiment, learning process is known as operant conditioning. He observes that positive external motivators (reward) are more productive and efficient then negative incentives (punishment) in cultivating good behaviour. (Lori Corrigan. Intrinsic & Extrinsic Motivational behaviors).

The Distractions of the Technology

What deter students from giving ears to learning lessons is called distractions. Teachers observe distractions in different forms. Especially, on account of technology such as laptops, cell phones, iPod, iPad. The students try to text each other while in class. If there is wireless internet, students start to browse on internet and they can also use social networks such as Twitter, Face book, and MySpace etc. Day by day, Millions of people around the world are involved in social media and most of whose users are students. The students' addiction to the social media networks can have a negative impact.

During the lesson, Students like to keep in touch with their friends; they try to sign online to check their status continuously, for Social media is available to anyone at any time. They listen to their lessons partially, because they are online with their laptops or smart phones and spend the majority of their time checking their 'home page'. So that, their ability to pay attention to one person or thing is almost impossible, because of their heavily involvement in social media; they will always keep themselves doing something else. That is stated in the Time Magazine in U.S. Edition an article called *Wired for Distraction: Kids and Social Media*, written by Dalton Conley and which is quoted as "continuous partial attention" by Linda Stone, a Microsoft Executive.

Google searching engine becomes a virtual teacher. Therefore:

- 1) Students do not understand the lesson while in class, they can directly refer to this virtual teacher to find the required information or instructions;
- 2) They disrupt the lesson and distract and disturb almost everyone in the classroom;
- 3) This causes teachers to lose their motivation to teach and maybe as side effect they repeat the instructions and information related to their lesson;
- 4) The motivation is lost and the attention of the students may turn on the technology users who fumble with their belongings;
- 5) Teachers observe a distracting chain-reaction effect during the lesson due to use these technological devices, whenever students miss vital information and instructions and start to ask the other students the missing points, for that reason they and distract all the other students around them;
- 6) Depending of technology, some students come to class without pen, pencil, books, copies etc. They may distract their desk mates to ask missing materials. Because of lack of required materials, It will cause lack of attention in the lesson (Stephanie Cai, List of Classroom Distractions).

A comparison

We notice technological pollution in educational institutions. For that reason, demands for motivational factors increase as well, inasmuch as there are distractions in the classrooms. Scientific evidence suggests that virtual environment is making our children different and weird creatures. Today, Integration of technology into classrooms becomes a major goal for educational institutions and the internet and computers are playing important roles therein. 'Often school strategic plans are based on extensions of what is currently known rather than on best practice models and ideas' (Gillian M. Eadie. 2001). Thus, there is high demanding interest for computer and internet access to enhance classroom activities. Step by step, the computers and internet have become inseparable assistants for teachers and students. No one can deny that the Internet is able

to be exceptional and effective research aid, if we identify required search techniques. The advantages of using the internet for research objectives involve the followings:

1. The ability to access the very latest information;
2. Being able to communicate directly with subject experts by email;
3. Twenty-four hours Access, 7 days a week, 364 days a year;
4. Its interactivity makes it enjoyable to use (curriculum/libcomp.html).

We notice negative impacts of technology use in classroom environment. Students do not know how to handle and balance technology use. Students who are surfing in internet while listening to lessons cannot use full capacity of their brain's learning power. At universities there are many lectures that require the complete focus of the students. The University of California in Los Angeles conducted a research and found out two types of learning sections in the brain:

1. The students that use the hippocampus region of the brain listen to lessons with full attention are called 'focused learners' that are not distracted by their laptops and other devices; they use the hippocampus region of their brain that is the centre of the memory and learning part of the brain;
2. The students that use the striatum of the brain called 'multitaskers' (Conley, 2011) are distracted by their laptops and other devices.

Nevertheless, Schools have the internet that makes researching easier, and isn't as time consuming and we have information ready at our fingertips. Teachers use the internet to supply a useful and easy system for students. They can send homework, any information the students missed and class notes through website. Schools have other means of technology in the classroom like projector and smart board, by means of this technology we can display and model things for our students. Teachers teach and explain to students without the hassle of white board markers. Further, using iPad and iPod technology can offer a personal level utilization in school. For that reason, students take notes and download required books. This technology is not only easy and convenient but also lightens the weight of students' backpacks (Technology shapes, may11, 2011). It is unlike paper, it is digital and without borders. it lacks physical tangibility and disconnects with flesh and blood reality then affects my core. Hence, my thinking about how to communicate, read, write, learn, and understand etc. is affected. These influential technological tools sway my imagination, comprehension, humanity and worldview (good absences). Further, we don't move around to handle various chores and tasks, for we can do them through remote control pushing just a button.

Eventually, Teaching well necessitates motivation in the classroom, it occurs when the students have no objection with the rigor of learning process. Teachers should treat their students with "caring is sharing" policy and support them and also open their horizons for the betterment of the lessons. To do so, they should:

1. Give beneficial feedback which supports students' beliefs so that they can do well;
2. Assign tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult;
3. Create an open and positive atmosphere;
4. Make them feel that they are valued members of learning community;
5. Encourage students to find personal meaning and value in the material.

To motivate our students; Teachers should:

1. Make activities relevant to students' lives, such as students' culture, interest and social lives;

2. Give your students options that they select their partner in the lab, determine their due dates for assignment or grading scale;
3. Balance the challenge in the classroom; because the difficulty of the lesson should be slightly above their current ability, otherwise students can hide their ability;
4. Find out some role models to make students see the relevance in the subject matter, such as invited guest speaker, fellow students or other person;
5. Find peer model to make students learn by watching a peer at a task;
6. Establish a sense of belonging, it encourages student participation and this sense is fundamental need to feel connected or related to other people;
7. Adopt a supportive attitude, because it increases student enjoyment, interest, performance and engagement;
8. Find out some strategies for struggling students, such as extra project, note-taking, completing an assignment, or reviewing for an exam” (Karin Kirk, Motivating Students).

Conclusion

It is useful to use positive external motivators (reward) are more productive and efficient than negative incentives (punishment) in cultivating good behaviour. For some students are motivated by rewards, some are motivated by punishments. In reality, every student’s taste and understanding is not same. Teachers should assure that the partial attention students are giving their teachers is not sufficient for getting good grades. Because of the addiction of the social media, students are not realizing the harm they are doing when they are taking some minutes to check their social media network accounts. Once they check their accounts in internet, they become unaware how time flies away like the wind.

For many students, the Internet is an easy way to escape their reality and it provides an escape that causes increasingly distracting the more time one puts into it. Most of the students consider internet as food, air and water, thinking like this seems uncontrollable and staggering. Regarding technology, for the good and betterment of lectures and students, universities may start thinking and putting into practice “laptop ban” and “smart phone ban” lectures or “laptop permit” and “smart phone permit” lectures proportionally. Many students admit that while in the lesson, using technology through social media networks is the cause to their poor grades.

It is regarded to conduct a controlling mechanism which can help students how to handle and balance technology use in each educational institution. Students and teachers started to realize positive and productive potential of social media networks in education. It is useful for students to have a constructive balance between a social media network and homework through self-disciplining and appropriate planning. It is time for students to realize all the negative impacts of technology that affect their schooling and well-being. It is crucial for each student to realize distractions of social media networks as a result make big decisions and start changing their habits in this regard.

Actually, the learning capacity of each student in the educational institutions is not same, because some of them are ‘focused learners’, some of them are ‘multitaskers’. Taking into consideration the future of respective students, it is necessary to have ‘laptop ban and smart phone ban’ lessons. Because everybody is not focused learner. ‘Multitaskers’ is a bad learning habit, those students can only work in assembly line (Conley, 2011). As a result, if students aim for high paying jobs, During the lesson, they need to switch off their laptop and smart phones for better future.

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