**ED 407Assignment**

A 21st century instructional setting that was designed to create an active learning environment to support the active learners. Learning is a social and transactional process occurring between individuals, mediated through language and other cultural tools, in the context of educational environment. The term **environment**denotes the totality of the surroundings and conditions in which something or someone lives or functions. Where, learning environments starts with a physical space, a virtual equivalent, or at least a set of organizational principles that had their origins in a conventionally space-influenced model. The infusion of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning is one of the primary drivers about learning environments.

The impacts of environment on teaching and learningtends to focus much more upon some elements (noise) and to fail to synthesize understandings (the implications of noise and temperature research tend to conflict). Cultural and geographical differences also highlight the importance of sensitivity to context. For these reasons it is very difficult to make judgments about which areas are ‘worth’ focusing on. There is clear evidence that extremes of environmental elements (poor ventilation or excessive noise) have negative effects on students and teachers and that improving these elementshas significant benefits.

Another interaction between users and the physical environment occurs in the use teachers make of their environment and how it affects their behavior. There is a considerable amount of literature relating to lighting in the classroom. The classroom is the basic structural unit of our educational system and the nature of the classroom is clearly affected by the university design. Teachers preferred classrooms with windows, daylightand views, but these were not a top priority. Students need guidance on proper use of ergonomically designed furniture. Computers in the classroom are a powerful educational tool and their use is becoming more widely available in universities. There are important organizational and pedagogical considerations relating to the siting of computers and other ICT equipment within a classroom and embedded within existing pedagogy. Online and blended courses are also changing the balance between faculty and staff in numbers and influence in the learning environment.

The learning situation in which students find themselves influences their approach to learning. Learners may adopt: a Meaning-oriented approach (associated with understanding and analytical thinking), a Reproducing approach (associated with memorising and reproducing factual information) or a Strategic approach (associated with recongnising and utilising the most effective ways of achieving good grades). The first and last of these correlate with achieving good grades; the Reproducing approach the opposite.

The organizational dimension of classrooms and universities is made up of elements that determine their structure, rules and degree of openness to change. The factors such as instructional time, class size, discipline codes, management structure, parent and community involvement and school atmosphere, continuously interact with factors in the relationship growth domains as well as with the architectural design and physical conditions of the university.

**Learner-centered Environments:** Learner centered refers to environments that pay careful attention to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that learners bring to the educational setting. Teachers who are learner centered recognize the importance of building on the conceptual and cultural knowledge that students bring with them to the classroom. Learner-centered instruction also includes sensitivity to the cultural practices of students and the effect of those practices on classroom learning. Learner-centered teachers also respect the language practices of their students because they provide a basis for further learning. Overall, learner-centered environments include teachers who are aware that learners construct their own meanings, beginning with the beliefs, understandings, and cultural practices they bring to the classroom. If teaching is conceived as constructing a bridge between the subject matter and the student, learner-centered teachers keep a constant eye on both ends of the bridge. The teachers attempt to get a sense of what students know and can do as well as their interests and what each student knows, cares about, is able to do, and wants to do.

**Knowledge-centered Environments:** Environments that are solely learner centered would not necessarily help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively in society. Attempts to create environments that are knowledge centered also raise important questions about how to foster an integrated understanding of a discipline. Many models of curriculum design seem to produce knowledge and skills that are disconnected rather than organized into coherent wholes. A challenge for the design of knowledge-centered environments is to strike the appropriate balance between activities designed to promote understanding and those designed to promote the automaticity of skills necessary to function effectively without being overwhelmed by attention requirements. Students for whom it is effortful to read, write, and calculate can encounter serious difficulties learning. The importance of automaticity has been demonstrated in a number of areas.

**Assessment-centered Environments:** The key principles of assessment provide opportunities for feedback and revision and that what is assessed must be congruent with one's learning goals. It is important to distinguish between two major uses of assessment. The formative assessment involves the use of assessments as sources of feedback to improve teaching and learning. The summative assessment measures what students have learned at the end of some set of learning activities. Formative assessments include teachers' comments on work in progress, such as drafts of papers or preparations for presentations. Summative assessments include teacher-made tests given at the end of a unit of study and state and national achievement tests that students take at the end of a year. Such self-assessment is an important part of the metacognitive approach to instruction. Many assessments developed by teachers’ overly emphasize memory for procedures and facts. Portfolio assessments provide a format for keeping records of students' work as they progress throughout the year and, for allowing students to discuss their achievements and difficulties with their teachers, parents, and fellow students. A challenge for the learning sciences is to provide a theoretical framework that links assessment practices to learning theory.

**Community-centered Environments:** New developments in the science of learning suggest that the degree to which environments are community centered is also important for learning. There are several aspects of community, including the community of the classroom, the school, and the connections between the school and the larger community, including the home. The importance of connected communities becomes clear when one examines the relatively small amount of time spent in school compared to other settings.

Four perspectives on the design of learning environments are important in designing these environments and involve the degree to which they promote a sense of community. Ideally, students, teachers, and other interested participants share norms that value learning and high standards. Finally, there needs to be alignment among the four perspectives of learning environments. They all have the potential to overlap and mutually influence one another. Issues of alignment appear to be very important for accelerating learning both within and outside of universities.

The learning space remains the heart of the educational enterprise, but the time has come for educators to widen the scope of inquiry about effectiveness in learning to include a fuller list of factors. Time is a critical factor. Space is a central concept, time has a stronger impact on what works and what does not. If time is a critical factor in virtual learning environments, it has to be represented explicitly. We have already addressed two timing issues: synchronous versus asynchronous communication; increasing flexibility is often more crucial than decreasing distance.

In ancient time, a professor standing at the front of the room and gave lecturing. Students were sitting in desks in rows, taking notes on paper. Some interaction between the students and the professor was probably not so much between students. We would see books, pencils, a chalkboard and erasers. There wouldn’t be laptops, projectors, and iPhones. No one would be surfing the web or sending instant messages to people in another classroom across campus or on the other side of the world. Today, looking at any university campus, we would see these and other changes, many of which are the products of developments in technology and some that are not. In higher education today, students and faculty carry always connected electronic devices. The amount of information available from those devices dwarfs what was formerly available in any university library. Some classes meet in rooms with desks and a professor who lectures, but students today also have access to learning resources in a coffee shop, at the e-learning center, sitting besides classroom building. The introduction of information technology into virtually every aspect of our lives has led educators and students to think differently about where and how learning takes place. Technology has opened vast numbers of new doors into learning; it has also helped us better understand facets of learning that have nothing to do with technology. It is the catalyst that compels us to look at what’s new, what isn’t new, and to try to understand how all of the factors work together.

Since virtual learning environments are a new generation of computer-based educational systems, it is worth looking at whether computer-based learning is more effective than learning in a traditional classroom. Most classrooms now have at least a minimal kit of equipment for mediated instruction—network access, a projector, various media players, and a computer or at least the provision of connection for a laptop and a network port. These technological aids bring more informational resources into the teaching space, and they also extend the boundaries of the room, enabling outreach to other sources of information and indeed to other places. In a sense, the addition of IT in itself begins to transform a space into an environment.

Many students enrolled in universities today harbor different expectations from those of only a generation ago about the kinds of learning activities they will experience. The role of higher education within society has expanded and changed, and the student population has become tremendously more diverse. The traditional full-time residential university experience immediately following high school graduation is becoming less dominant. Technology allows faculty and students to think beyond the space of learning and consider factors separated by time or location that influence learning.

There are a number of instruments to assess school design that are intended to inspire and measure change, to allow comparisons to be made between universities or to facilitate a greater understanding among users of their environment. The lectures and the seminars gives students the content, gives what students need to know, but then if there’s anything students do not understand instructors can run makes it all make sense. The discussion gives the opportunity for students to talk to other students. The seminars and lectures keep students keep mouth shut mostly, instructor encourage students to speak, expressing point of view on a subject and that might get the rest of class thinking. It was actually when we started doing the coursework that it actually helped us a lot because we could ask co-instructor who’s done may be not exactly the same course but had done something very similar units and ask them what problems they had and then sort of being able to talk to them and see how co-instructors could be help us to solve the problem that was very useful.

The instructors had pre-determined subjects on which the class were to deliver presentations. The class was split into small groups and given a topic. Sometimes, the class was asked individually to write down two questions to contribute to the quiz, relating to anything they had been taught over the term. The class was then divided into two teams. When it appeared in one team that one or two students were coming up with all the answers the Leader addressed this by encouraging all students to contribute. In part this was achieved by getting students to refer to notes and textbooks. Instructor awarded a point based on the answers.

Our teaching group usually discussed curriculum milestones of our community of practice meetings. We (instructors) also discussed the industry linkage plan to reduce the knowledge gap and getting job for students. Our educational community of practice concentrated on institutionalization development planning in meetings. Instructors share the usage experience of teaching toolkits to co-instructors how instructors apply in classrooms. The improvement of these teachings’ practice forward to share meeting records at face book group and Viber group. Instructors gain knowledge and idea by observing peer’s class activity in which how to apply the teaching toolkit in class room. Instructors have applied feedback gained during the learning team process. By seeing others’ instruction, we get more idea on how to apply the teaching toolkits in our classroom and can also give our opinions to them to improve our institutional learning environment. Learning environment of our university also has to invite instructors our UTYCC group to share knowledge and learning methodology which they used in their class.

Many of the modern learning environments being built today effectively promote and support a range of pedagogies including delivering, applying, creating, communicating and decision-making. Modern learning spaces can support teaching better than single-cell classrooms. Working in an open, flexible learning environment where inquiries are shared, interventions devised collaboratively and reflections based on both self and peer observations, leads to a more robust, continuously improving community of practice.

As the pace of change in the 21st century continues to increase, the world is becoming more interconnected and complex, and the knowledge economy is craving more intellectual property. In this environment, it is critical that we shift our focus from education to life-long learning. From the perspective of teachers and learners, it is clear that the design of schools and classrooms directly influences what goes on inside them, and can sometimes be a critical factor in how well students succeed in university. This is an everyday reality. Yet, cases in which teachers, learners and parents are approached for their suggestions and recommendations to improve these conditions have rarely been reported. It is also uncommon for educational policies to address the physical dimensions of learning environments beyond setting minimal standards for health and safety.

Theoretically centering on optimal learning environments will contribute to classroom-based theories of engagement and learning that are of direct utility to teachers. Identifying environmental dimensions that promote engagement has the potential to enhance university instruction and learning for the benefit of both teachers and students. Foundational perspectives on motivation and contemporary theories of educational psychology continue to push our thinking with respect to design and implementation of learning environments that promote engagement and positive experiences likely to advance student learning.

In this way, a new focus on learning environments can facilitate the kind of transformation that educators have for years been calling for. Any learning environment will reflect a set of cultural values about teaching and learning, and understanding these values and the degree to which the design of learning environments will influence the attitudes of students and university education is a vital part of the broad discussion about learning environments.

**References :**

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