Department of Education, Patna University
Course No-C.C8
Unit-2, Learner Centred Instructional Techniques/Methods :
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Project Method

- ➢ Objective : After going through this topic, students will be able to :
  - Understand the concept of Project Method
  - Organise the project work in class

- ➢ Content
  - Introduction
  - Meaning
  - Objectives
  - Types
  - Steps
  - Advantage
  - Limitation
  - Suggestion

Introduction

The Project Method is a medium of instruction which was introduced during the 18th century into the schools of architecture and engineering in Europe when graduating students had to apply the skills and knowledge they had learned in the course of their studies to problems they had to solve as practicians of their trade, for example, designing a monument, building a steam engine. It is based on the philosophy of Pragmatism. Founded by John Dewey. In the early 20th Century, William Heard Kilpatrick expanded the project method into a philosophy of education. His device is child-centred and based in progressive education. Both approaches are used by teachers worldwide to this day. Unlike traditional education, proponents of the project method attempt to allow the student to solve problems with as little teacher direction as possible. The teacher is seen more as a facilitator than a deliver of knowledge and information.

As a method of teaching, founder is Dr. J.A. Stevenson. Emphasis is to practical, experimental, instrumental and utilitarian basis.

Philosophies behind this method are:
1. Children learn better through association, co-operation and activity.
2. Learning by doing
3. Learning by living, because life is actually full of projects and we try to carry out these projects every day.

Meaning

As cited by Jansen, (2012) described project teaching method as "a learning approach based on students working for a period of time in order to intensively investigate the real world

issues or problems in an interdisciplinary approach so as to produce something concrete through individual efforts or group work" .

Definitions**:**

Stevenson : "A project is a problematic act carried to completion in its natural setting".
Kilpatrick : "A project is a whole - hearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment".
Ballard : "A project is a bit of real life that has been imprted into the school".
Parker : "A project is a unit of activity in which pupils are made responsible for planning and purposing".

In other words we can say that:

A project is an educational method where students working individually or in small groups analyze and develop "real-life" problem or tackle a present day theme within a preset time limit, working independently and with the division of tasks clearly defined.

 From these definitions you can observe that

● A project is a task or an activity.

● It has some purpose.

● It is conducted in social and natural situation.

Objectives

- It is used to achieve cognitive and affective objectives.
- The main focus is to socialised a child and to develop the ability of problem solving.

Types of Project Method

According to Kilpatric, "A project is a whole-hearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment. Kilpatric has classified the project method in four types.

Constructive. When learners have to construct some things related to social life. e.g. charts, models, maps, parcels etc.

Artistic. These projects are generally allotted in the aesthetic fields of life. e.g. in music, drawing, painting art and culture.

Problem-Solving. These projects are given to solve the problems related to any life-situation or related to any subject e.g. how to operate bank accounts? Or how to send an email or letter. These general problems if solved, will make a child efficient for social-life.

Group-Work. A team of students is assigned a work to be performed. e.g. to develop a garden in the school.

 There are four basic elements of this teaching strategy which make it purposeful

1.   Spontaneity,

2.   Purpose,

3.   Significance, and

4.   Interest or Motivation.

Major steps of the Project Method.

1. Creating the situation (providing a situation)

 Provide for such a situation where in the pupils feel spontaneous urge to carry out a particular project according to their needs and interests. The teacher has to discover the interests, needs, tastes and aptitudes of children. He may draw the pupil's attention to the projects in mind through informal conversation or discussion as taking out children outside the school. Thus pupils are brought face to face with the situation.

2. Choosing the project (Selection of the Project)

The pupils should themselves choose the subject. Self choice leads to better results and entail self satisfaction. Pupils select any one, discuss the various projects, rejects some, explain others and thus come to a decision. The teacher should see that the project chosen are of great utility and satisfy the real need of the pupils and are within their capacity to be successfully carried out.

3. Planning

Pupil should themselves do the planning and the teacher is to guide them. Discussions may be held and each student should be encouraged to express his views and suggestions. The teacher may point out the difficulties involved in the carrying out of the project. Resources and limitations should be discussed. After such oral discussion, the detailed plan may be written up by the students in their project book.

4. Carrying out the project (Executing)

When the plan is ready, pupils are to put it to practice. Students themselves should distribute the various items of duties among themselves according to individual interest and capacities. Every student must contribute something towards the successful completion of the project. A chain of activities are to performed by the students. They are busy in collecting information, visiting various places and pupils, looking up maps, writing letters, referring library books, observing specimens, studying history, keeping accounts, calculating prices, inquiring rates, measuring lengths of areas. The teacher should guide the students provide necessary information and help them on right lines.

5. Evaluating

No project is complete unless the work done in it is evaluated. Students should assess their activities; whether they have been carried out in accordance with the plan or not, mistakes committed are noted.

6. Recording (Project Report)

The teacher should keep a complete record of work how they planned, what discussion were held, how duties were assigned and finally criticism of their own work and some important point for future reference.

Some examples of Project: ● By visiting various public institutions the students can prepare a report on various functions of those institutions i.e. Post Office, Hospital, Bank. Police Station etc.

A project involves planning and developing a schedule of study and outcomes to be achieved over a period of time usually longer than that of an individual assignment. Implicit in the project are educational ideas of deep learning as opposed to surface learning. The students are not required to only produce a single outcome, but are required to link multiple, and often distantly related, prior learning tasks. The role of the teacher throughout the project is one of a facilitator of each student's learning strategy. It is important that both teachers and students know precisely what is involved in doing project work. The students should be familiar with the assessment structure that will be used by the teacher to assess and grade their project.

Project work can be carried out individually or in groups. The formation of groups can be carried out in one of two ways: either students form their own group or the teacher identifies the group membership. Both of these methods have their own merits and drawbacks. Students who form their own groups tend to choose friends with similar backgrounds and objectives. This may detract from the rich learning experience to be gained by groups formed by students with different approaches to learning.

Teachers can form groups in a variety of ways. It could be done randomly by allocating a number to each student and selecting these numbers from a hat or by using random number tables to select groups. If this method is adapted some useful statistics can be discussed and elucidated during the selection process. One of the most useful methods used is to compose groups by individual student ability. In order to use this technique this method obviously assumes that the teacher knows his/her students. Teachers who previously used this method recommend that the group contain a mixed ability range; otherwise one may well find that a high flier group or a very weak group often materialises. (Weak groups present problems when or if—verbal assessment is given.) Another advantage of a mixed ability group is that the most able students can be used as mentors to the least able. It is well known in educational circles that we learn by doing and by teaching others.

Carefully choice of a project is required; otherwise teachers may find that the project does not proceed very well and in some cases not succeed at all. Whether students choose projects on their own or in conjunction with their teachers, clearly defined objectives for the projects are essential. Teachers vary in their opinion of projects and in particular the assessment of these projects. A great deal depends on whether projects are introduced for examination purposes or for instructional reasons. If the projects are part of an examination syllabus the assessment structure should be followed as stated in the syllabus. When projects are not part of a formal examination, an appropriate model for assessment can be used. These projects can be assessed in stages or at the end, depending on the teacher's preference. Teachers have found that a successful project begins with a clear problem scenario, with precise goals identified. From this a detailed outline of work can be produced.

Advantages of Project Method

● The project method is based on the principles of active learning. The student gets totally involved in the activity which helps in enhancing his/her knowledge, understanding and skills in real life situation and ultimately in developing a holistic personality.

● Since all the activities of a project are related to the real life experiences, each of such activities is meaningful to the student. Therefore, meaningful learning is always associated with the project method.

● The student enjoys full freedom in conducting a project. This develops self confidence to act and also promotes a sense of responsibilities among the students.

● The student gets acquainted with the types of work which he/she is expected to perform in future. Thus, the project method helps the student in his/her preparation for a future life.

● The student gets the scope to imbibe several social qualities like cooperation, and team work, group affinity, and sacrifice through project work.

● Interest and motivation for the project activities are spontaneously created and no external persuasion or force is needed to attract the students toward learning.

● Completion of the project gives individuals a sense of accomplishment which in turn encourages the student for further learning

Limitation of Project Method

It has the following disadvantages:

- The subject content can not be taught systematically or in a sequence.
- The plan projects can not be designed for all school subjects and on the whole subject – matter of school subjects.
- It is very costly and time consuming strategy of teaching.
- It can not be used in teaching for higher classes.
- All social qualities can not be developed by this strategy.

Suggestions

The following precautions should be taken in this strategy:

- It should be used in agriculture and technical institutions.
- The problem of the project should be economical and useful.
- It should be employed as a supplementary teaching technique.
- It should be used at primary and secondary levels.

Self evaluation questions:

- Give the brief concept of Project Method? How you organise the project work in class room situation.

➢ Topic for next class :
- Problem Solving Method

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