

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

Student Centred Teaching and Learning Experience from the External World

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I. Teacher-Centered versus Student-Centered Learning Approaches: A Glimpse

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1. Pre-amble

The behavior of a human being is manifestation of his intrinsic nature, acquired genetically, and the extrinsic, which is learned in the society through day-to-day interaction. Therefore, even if one can say that there is a possibility that two individuals will have the same societal exposure it is impossible that they will have identical intrinsic nature (I am cautious about identical twins). This means that, the way each of us deal with the enormous challenges in life or in our day-to-day social interactions are different from others.

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If we agree on the above idea, it is automatic that we agree on the facts that 'since teachers are human beings and teaching is interaction, different teachers interact differently with their students'. This is true even when teachers follow the same teaching philosophy. Otherwise, if I am not mistaken, I have the conviction that teachers of all levels, do well understand that their job demands them to enable their students understand the concepts in the subject they are teaching, or in general produce creative, confident and skillful human beings ready for life's many challenges. It is for this end that every teacher exerts effort in his teaching process. However, educational studies have revealed that, no matter how a teacher exerts effort in attaining his students fit to the standard, the teaching methodology adopted by the teacher will have a paramount impact on the degree of success.

Since 2003, the Government of Ethiopia has officially opted for a seemingly ambitious reform in the structure and content of teacher education and *learner-centered learning* has become the buzzword for the reform. Employment of learner-centered, active learning, and problem solving pedagogical approaches and phrases of either educational or political relevance such as: quality, accessibility, relevance, cognitive ability, competence, school experience, practicum, etc have been frequently reiterated in various policy documents.

Although non-familiarity of the state 'change agents' themselves about the curricular concepts to the proposed paradigm shift, lack of effective communication on the pros and cons of the pedagogical philosophy planned to replace the older with groups who are actors at the implementation phase, the mis-match in aims, practices, and conceptions between schooling and teacher preparation activities, etc. are strongly commented in the literature, it is my feeling that any teacher should have a clear stand on the teaching philosophy that he thinks is appropriate for the development of student's learning abilities - that is, their capacity to think clearly and creatively, plan and implement their plans, and communicate their understanding in a variety of ways.

The main aim of this paper is then not to comment on the practicality, timeliness, obstacles, success or failure of the paradigm shift towards a learner-centered pedagogical approach in our country but to present some of the views of educational philosophers on the purpose of education and the successful pedagogical approaches to prepare students to

become confident and skillful citizens, ready to assume the responsibilities that the grown-up world requires. Since the current move in the paradigm shift is from the lecture (teacher-centered) to the student-centered pedagogical approach, the paper centers on the pros and cons of these methods.

2. Education: A Tool Mandatory for Development

Education as a change process with many behavioral and contextual variables paves the way for a more just social order on the grounds that it instills in the young crucial humanitarian values such as equity, tolerance and peace. A country's progress in education is absolutely essential for the country's sustainable economic growth, good governance, environmental protection, improvement in maternal and child health and political stability. Empirical evidence suggests that educational investment has been one of the most important factors contributing to economic growth in both developed and developing countries. However, the successful contribution of education to the overall growth of a country strongly depends on its quality. Education needs to meet minimum quality standard in terms of minimum inputs (facilities, teaching materials, qualified teachers, parent and community support), processes (effective leadership, monitoring and evaluation, accountability, community participation, effective teaching-learning and assessment) and outputs (high student learning, societal and individual returns) to successfully contribute to the economic growth of a country (1). Therefore, access to good-quality education is of central importance to national development.

The quality of education is related both to student outcomes and to "improved environments and educational aids which lead to detectable gains in the knowledge, skills and values acquired by students." Generally quality education includes: Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace; Processes through which trained teachers use student-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful

assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society (2).

Although the current level of educational quality within Ethiopia's universities is not determined through standardized testing of tertiary students when evaluated based on the minimum inputs and processes that quality education requires, a report by the World Bank (3) indicates that three points of information combine to raise the possibility that educational quality may presently be at risk. First, Ethiopian higher education system is in a state of rapid expansion and it is always difficult for any nation to maintain quality standards in midst of rapid enrollment expansion. Second, the current level of spending per student on academic expenses is quite low from both a regional and an international perspective. Third, the proportion of academic staff with PhD degrees has been declining, and will probably decline further as rapid enrollment expansion proceeds. The report also indicates that such expansion of the higher education system without maintaining and improving quality will be counterproductive and, in the long run, destabilizing.

Improving the quality of education through improving the teaching-learning process is assumed to be cost-effective than through improving system in put which is more difficult for countries like Ethiopia. Realizing this fact, parallel with the rapid expansion of the education system the government called for improving quality of education by employing interactive teaching and learning process. Although the learner-centered pedagogy is emphasized in Ethiopia through the Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO), just recently, in 1994, the literature indicates that the philosophy is an old one and described to be an effective subject delivery mode when compared to the classical lecture method. The curricular concepts and the way the method should be implemented in order to achieve its desired goal however, seems to be vague at all top to down levels and requires emphasis.

3. Education: Its Purpose and Mode of Delivery

Many educational philosophers have described the purpose of education particularly the question of whether the chief goal of educators should be imparting knowledge, developing intellectual independence, or instilling moral or political values; the nature of

education-related concepts, including the concept of education itself; the sources and legitimacy of educational authority; and the conduct of educational research.

The aim of education says Rousseau (4) is to learn how to live, and this is accomplished by following a guardian who can point the way to good living. In his book "On Education" Rousseau stated that, "all children are perfectly designed organisms, ready to learn from their surroundings so as to grow into virtuous adults. But, due to the bad influence of corrupt society, they often fail to do so. Rousseau advocated an educational method which consisted of removing the child from society (i.e., to a country home) and alternately conditioning him through changes to environment and setting traps and puzzles for him to solve or overcome.

A Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire (5), who is claimed to be 'the most significant educational thinker of the twentieth century' by some scholars was best-known for his attack on what he called the "banking concept of education" in which the student was viewed as an empty account to be filled by the teacher. When teachers are dominant over learners, already existing knowledge not only dominates but excludes the possibility of creating new knowledge and theory (6). Freire also strongly opposed the teacher-student dichotomy and he wanted us to think in terms of teacher-student and student-teacher, that is, a teacher who learns and a learner who teaches, as the basic roles of classroom participation.

According to Neil Postman (7) the role of schools is to provide the young with "reasons to continue educating themselves". In his book "Teaching as a Subversive Activity" introduced the concept of a school driven by the inquiry method, the basis of which is to get the students themselves to ask and answer relevant questions. The "teacher" (the author disdained the term and thought a new one should be used) would be limited in the number of declarative sentences he could utter per class, as well as questions he personally knew the answer to. He also stresses that, students must be taught to be "error detectors" and teachers must help them discover "inconvertible truths and enduring ideas".

The inquiry method is described to provide the conditions for students to build progressively what they don't know on top of what they do, and for the teacher to understand, through close listening, what the student knows, from where he/she can continue to provide the conditions for the learner to progress, and develop their understanding.

Jerome Bruner (8), another important contributor to the inquiry method in education emphasized intuition as a neglected but essential feature of productive thinking. He felt that interest in the material being learned was the best stimulus for learning rather than external motivation such as grades. Bruner developed the concept of discovery learning which promoted learning as a process of constructing new ideas based on current or past knowledge. Students are encouraged to discover facts and relationships and continually build on what they already know. Bruner states that a theory of instruction should address four major aspects: (1) predisposition towards learning, (2) the ways in which a body of knowledge can be structured so that it can be most readily grasped by the learner, (3) the most effective sequences in which to present material, and (4) the nature and pacing of rewards and punishments. Good methods for structuring knowledge should result in simplifying, generating new propositions, and increasing the manipulation of information.

Empirical evidences have shown that, students who are given the freedom to explore areas based on their personal interests, and who are accompanied in their striving for solutions by a supportive, understanding facilitator not only achieve higher academic results but also experience an increase in personal values, such as flexibility, self-confidence and social skills. In arguing on a learning style Carl Rogers describes *whole-person learning*, being the goal of Student-Centered Teaching, as "Significant learning combines the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feelings, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning. When we learn in that way, we are whole, utilizing all our masculine and feminine capacities."(8).

4. The Pros and cons of the teacher-centered and the student-centered methods

For years, many of us have been teaching students without realizing the philosophy of education we are following. However, at some point in our work as a teacher we will realize that our teaching methods and style stem from a specific philosophy of education, even if we are not consciously aware of what that philosophy is. It is very important to articulate our philosophy as we work at becoming a better teacher. Ultimately, our philosophy will be founded on what we value in education, what methods we believe are effective, and how we think students learn best.

The student-centered pedagogical method is emphasized to be outstanding for the retention of learned lessons than the lecture method virtually by all educational researchers. The lecture method however, has its own advantages under conditions where the student-centered method could not be applied. Here the pros and cons of the teacher-centered and the student-centered methods are given. One can use this information to begin making his philosophy explicit.

4.1 The Teacher-Centered Approaches

The teacher-centered approach usually takes the form of “listen and learn” model. The teacher maximizes delivery of information and control of the class with little or no involvement of students.

Pros:

- large volume of information is delivered in a short amount of time
- content organization and pacing is totally controlled by the teacher
- provides forum for expert experience and testimony
- appropriate for large numbers of students
- quick and easy assessment methods generally can be employed

Cons:

- knowledge controlled by the instructor
- one-way communication
- not necessarily conducive to critical thinking

- promotes passive learning
- can not accommodate large numbers of students.

4.2. The Student-Centered Approaches

This is an approach which promotes learning by feeling. In many parts of the world, the results of educational research have been used by many teachers to craft teaching methods that are innovative, interactive, student-driven, and responsive to a variety of learning styles. The student-centered approaches require active participation from teachers *and* students. The student is considered to be responsible for his learning and much of the responsibility for learning is put on the student. Some common forms of student-centered teaching are: **Inquiry learning** - which focuses on posing problems or questions, which students explore to develop an understanding of concepts. **Constructivism**: where the learners are expected to construct and develop knowledge within the framework of past experiences and personal learning styles. **Experiential**: which centers on the motto "hands-on, minds-on," and students are allowed to practice the concepts or processes being taught.

Pros:

- high student participation in the learning process
- students are owners of knowledge
- provides real life connections
- enhances critical thinking and learning ability
- appropriate for multiple learning styles
- allows for multiple assessment strategies

Cons:

- more difficult to implement with large numbers of students
- can be more time consuming than lecturing
- not effective for all curricula
- students may be resistant to trying new approaches to learning

5. Conclusion

Any citizen of a country would like to see his country at the highest stage of development and prosperity. By the same token, as citizens of this poor country, Ethiopia, I have no doubt that we all share the feeling of getting our country categorized under the highly developed and wealthy countries. The psychological emotions of all of us have been agonized by the humiliation that we receive from the international community due to our unfolded ever-stretched hands for food aid. The experience of developed countries tells us that education has the lions share among the factors that contribute for the development of a country. Needless to mention that the education we are talking about must be relevant and fulfill minimum quality requirements.

The few articles cited above among many similar documents emphasize that as long as situations favor its implementation, the learner-centered approach is by far preferred over the teacher-centered approach to produce self-directed, self-initiated learners and leaders who possess excellent problem-solving abilities. These are the kind of professionals whom we aspire to have specially when we come across non-efficient and weak leaders in making decisions, non-productive and boss-conformant professionals lacking confidence in exercising the truth they feel end so on. No one of us is against having the kind of professionals the learner-centered approach is claimed to produce through empirical evidences.

The factors that contribute to education quality problem in Ethiopia are enormous. Therefore, I don't have the feeling that this new approach may be the sole treatment to alleviate all the education quality problems in Ethiopia. Moreover, as a teacher who tried to apply the method in teaching chemistry I can witness that its appropriate implementation requires re-investigation. Following were the kind of problems I faced while trying to implement the learner-centered approach:

1. When I scan in my mind through the various learner-centered methods of teaching I know to choose one which is appropriate to teach a particular topic or lesson, probably due to lack of sufficient experience in using the method, I find most of them inappropriate or less appropriate for the lesson that I intend to "teach"/facilitate. If I did apply one of these method, which I felt is relatively better than the others I find

students feel to have not covered that topic and frequently ask me whether the exam includes that particular topic or not.

2. The number of students in my classes range between 70 and 100 and these students have never been exposed to a learning style which makes them fully responsible for their learning. Therefore, organizing such a large class for an activity, which I need students to carry out, will usually take much of the time allotted for the lesson. By the end of the period when I evaluate the volume of knowledge the students gained, I feel to have not attained the goal I set for that particular lesson in my plan and I consider that period as wasted.
3. At the beginning of the course I usually use the student-centered learning approach. After the elapse of some weeks when I see that I will fall short of time to cover the topics listed in the course outline I immediately shift to the lecture method which allows me to control my pace.
4. Due to lack of previous exposure to such a teaching methodology, students hesitate to accept ideas forwarded by their friends while discussing on a certain issue and they usually look for my approval. My approval gets the students at ease because they feel that they have the right answers in mind to the questions which will appear in the exams. Even if a student has a different opinion on a particular concept, he knows that the answer which I am going to consider being correct in my exam will be the answer which conforms to my views and this is the driving force for the students to enquire for my opinion on an issue. Thus, the assessment method itself negatively impacts the effective implementation of the learner-centered approach.
5. Students usually complain about the absence of adequate reference materials in the libraries and insist the use of the teacher-centered method – the method which they are used to. Such a complaint, although it has a truth element, it mainly stems from fear of taking complete responsibility for their learning and lack of confidence on the correctness of their understanding of the concepts in the topics which they learned by themselves and whether their understandings are in line with the teacher's understanding or not.

These problems indicate that implementation of the learner-centered method requires to be well designed. The methodology, although widely phrased in all documents associated with the teacher education reform in Ethiopia, but poorly understood concept in practice, is a worthwhile subject delivery method to produce real assets for any of our endeavors aligned with the development of our country. If we find ourselves convinced by the empirical facts that support the learner-centered approach I feel that is a step ahead. It shows that we have a prepared mind ready to get on board when situations allow. Therefore, let's each of us have a clear stand on the methodology that we feel is the right one to produce perfect citizens exert all effort for its successful implementation.

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II. Student-Centred Education: some experience from the Netherlands

Dr. Kees Schippers**

ABSTRACT

Teacher centred and Student centred education` in the Netherlands demonstrates equal discussions like in Ethiopia i.e. the Higher Diploma Programme. The freedom of education in The Netherlands started in 1920: each primary school, secondary school or university got the opportunity to design its own specific curriculum consulting parents, officials and law. The comparing studies on universities of "pioneers" of child-centred education, specific visits abroad and sharing experiences inspired and influenced a lot of educators. Identity and learning methods became more varied in education. A strong and powerful participative environment on universities contributes to the student-centred approach now and demands adequate adaptation of the tasks and attitude of the teachers, management and officials. Continuous action research is undertaken to become a "continuous learning organisation".

INTRODUCTION

Student-centred education involves curriculum designing related to the competences of students joining the university of professional education.

In the case of designing the curriculum of the universities the Ministry of Education and Sciences provides the main objectives. The more specific 'translation' is made by the institutes themselves in the Netherlands because: 'Education is free' i.e. the translations.

The main objectives:

The main objectives of the Ministry of Education are the products of changing demands and changing minds formulated in proposals and the choice of all representatives in our democratic-organised system:

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Faculty of Education Jimma University as a VSO-volunteer i.e. as Higher Diploma Program Moderator in February 2007.

*Education proceeds in a continuous changing environment therefore you have to learn your long-life in order to get convenient with these new challenges;

*Changing environment and changing society means that the content of jobs and tasks should become adjustable too: flexibility and adaptability have become indispensable requirements;

*Despite of specific individual responsibilities and individual ambitions and competencies, students have to work cooperatively in teams too with regard to their future jobs and tasks;

*A lot of responsibilities have to be shared with other organisations abroad: worldwide. The effects of decisions are expanded to worldwide discussions and worldwide changing attitudes. There are a lot of possibilities to contact worldwide to discuss and to solve the differencies;

Central issue

*Central issue is that students differ in ambitions, talents and learning styles
Students differ only in ambitions, talents and learning styles. These differences should be used effectively and developed carefully. Competencies / assessments become the leading antecedences for students. They really have to prove their skills and knowledge, but in a more personal adaptive manner;

*The learning pathway contents a major and a minor study area. The major part is always related to the faculty studies. In the minor there is the possibility for each student to give accent to speciliazied interests.

Objectivices translated and consequences

On our University (HAN; Arnhem – Nijmegen) the Faculty of Education “ translated” these main objectives:

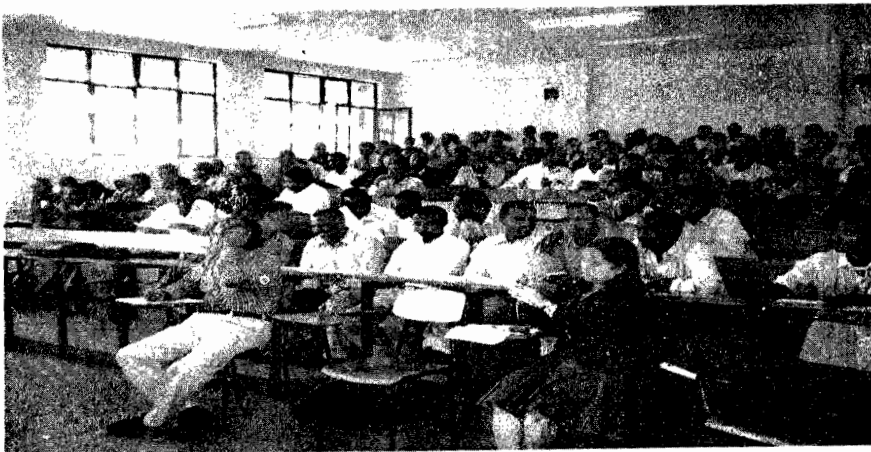
1. In general, there was a shift: from “**leader-centered**” towards “**student-centered**”. The fundamentals for this “student-centered” work and behavior are already constructed in the curricula of the primary and secondary education formerly. The educational ideas and proposals of several “ pioneers of student-centred-education” always were very welcome in The Netherlands and became important resources of studies on University level: John Dewey (USA), Ovide Decroly (Belgium), Peter Petersen (Jenaplan; Germany), Helen Parkhurst (Dalton, USA), Maria Montessori (Italy), Rudolf Steiner (Germany), Celestin

Freinet (France). The influences of Jan Amos Comenius (Tsecho-Slovakia), Jean Jacques Rousseau (France), Fröbel and Pestalozzi (Switzerland), Herbart (Germany) and Jan Lighthart (Netherlands) were very strong in The Netherlands because there was always the freedom of "constitution of education" with regard to the specific curriculum. So there is a long tradition and the influence of the studies on universities in this matter contributed to this capacity.

HDP has the same strong roots with regard to the principles of those pioneers of education in particular.

In this case the HDP in Ethiopia is really student centered with regard to all activities. Active learning methods are the continuous spirit

The model role taking of the HDLs: ` teach what and how you preaches ` , the coaching guideline.



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2. The shift "general" towards "specific" suggests specialisation. The area of education is very wide and is filled by a lot of specific subjects, items, beliefs and values. A lot of research has done with regards to education by "other" departments: general psychology / social psychology / psychology of development of childhood and adult, pedagogy, cultural anthropology, history of education, curriculum development, ortho-pedagogy, child-psychiatry and philosophy. When students progress in their theoretical and practical grown-up they will become more "interested" to explore and to invest in more specific studies.

The candidates are challenged to use new resources and results of research. The action research proposals illustrate varied interests and the need to explore.

3. Students only differ in ambitions, qualities and learning styles. The characters will differ too. Some students like to work with young children and others the adolescences of the secondary schools or comparable institutes. There are students who want to work with children with special needs. And there are students who intend to work on universities or offices of educational-support. There is a wide-spread scale of "fieldwork".

On the other hand every student has to develop their own identity (religion, beliefs...) That is why our University has chosen to be a "dialogue" faculty where Protestants, Roman-Catholics, Humanistic courses have to communicate and to learn from each other and to respect.

The "dialogue" (fusion) of "practice" and "theory" connects the faculty to the field of action. They are our main resources to train practical skills during the whole study-time and "building the job".....

Students from the university of Jimma are coming from all parts of Ethiopia with their specific cultural and social economical backgrounds. During the HDP all different possibilities are important energetic resources in the group work discussions. Specific ambitions are observed and used in the assignments and school placements.

4. Each student has own specific possibilities. To prove these **specific competencies** with regard to specific standards built up a more specific "student-applied" system of assessments.

Each student has to construct a unique personal portfolio. It contains all self-reflections and all certificates of assessments (practical and theoretical), thesis and essays made during the education on the faculty, courses or institutional tasks. It contains a curriculum vitae format and a format PDP (Personal Development Plan) to describe own ambitions, plans to undertake with regard to the study, job and professional future.

5. Own responsibility for the student means an adaptive and self-steering attitude.

Adaptive means that the student should be self-active to join several courses to improve lack of knowledge or specific skills. Every student is "diagnosed" when the study on the university has started and with regard to the results of the tests the student has to undertake "own actions" to improve.

The HDP candidates already graduated as teachers. The self adaptive attitude can be observed during all HDP lessons. The candidates are challenged to think and react themselves.

6. **An active learning and non-consuming attitude** can be obtained because the “role model” of all leaders, members of staff and other employees! Active learning methods (HDP!!) are a must: “teach what you preach...” in practice!

About the attitude of students: be mutual critical with respect to the others, be inclusive, always ask questions become self-reflective; “You are the “translator of the theory” in practice.....

A powerful participative learning environment is needed in order to support the active-learning methods, preparations for the practical exercises, presentations, thesis and essays. This learning environment has to be a safe and trustful environment in which it is nice to study, to prepare and to look for resources.

During the last ten years the University of Arnhem en Nijmegen (further named: HAN) built a new campus in Arnhem and in the neighbouring town Nijmegen joining the Radboud-University over there.

The buildings of the faculties are situated around a triangle square with students' café and space to sit and talk. In each faculty there is a restaurant. The building of the faculty of Education was special arranged round the study center to suggest that a strong, powerful and participative environment was involved: because the student-centred – education to the main object!

So there was the opportunity to design and to build up an environment accustomed to future developments and not only to 'adapt or to change somewhat'.

The study center is almost open and “in service”. There are “silent rooms” and “study cells”. There is an up-to-date library with the modern methods of all subjects, magazines of education, every-day-journals, audio-visual equipment and resources to be used in practice and graduates' best masterpieces to consult.

There is a lot of computers to support and access to intra-net and internet world-wide. There are copy-and multiply-machines and printers and all materials to be used. In the campus there is a paper- library shop and for all students, two electronic bank desks are available.

The environment study in Ethiopia is developing. Internet account and broad band connection for each student could accelerate the orientation on the surrounding and expanding world enormously.

The importance of English as a second language is evident during all HDP lessons and lessons of the candidates during their teaching activities.

The additional training of vocal English in the training lab has to become a challenge for the faculty.



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The four main **tasks for each leader** working in this powerful participative learning environment are:

1. **Teaching** theory + practical combined with the awareness of the percentages of teacher effectiveness.

In the HDP teaching combines theory and practice in a useful manner. The active learning methods have high standards of teacher effectiveness: the students are scoring!!

2. **Coaching** during institutes' practices and school practice: in primary and secondary schools;

Coaching: monthly individual consultations (portfolio + CV + PDP)

The coaching of the HDLs represents a shift to strong student centred responsibilities .In the portfolio the evidences of varied competences are proved and assessed. The quality of coaching is highly inspiring, friendly and irreversible: healthy for all kind of initiatives of the candidates.

3. **Designing** lesson-materials supporting active learning methods, designing programmes and courses within a subjective department of the faculty or (sometimes) in general.

The responsibility and ambition to join

specific curricula building conferences institutional, regional and national are highly involved in Ethiopia.

4. Support to the organisation. Based on evaluation reports, self reflections and experience and possibilities, every leader is invited to explain yearly the responsibilities and concerns about the Faculty and its curriculum, programme, organisation and atmosphere: the function-reports. Every leader has to design an individual plan of personal wishes and development-skills needed for the next university-year or future.

These four main tasks of a leader ought to be coloured by a participative attitude.....

Most HDLs and HDTs are involved in organisâtion or coordination more or less.

*Student-centered has consequences for the access to the **central assessment and quality-office of the faculty of education**. Each eight weeks there are possibilities to join the assessments. Each student has to make a digital appointment to join. Group or peer-assessments usually appointed in the same period of assessments. All students have a personal, unique intranet - access - address / number: provided by the faculty. The **credit-points** overview is always available for each student.*

*One of the advantages of the student-centered education is the **flexible** examination. Monthly examinations are planned and students can join when all assessments and formalities have fulfilled. After the final examination the student gets a provisional certificate and can go working in fact. The official graduation is situated in the official Music Hall in the capital of the province: Arnhem. During this ceremony the official papers and diplomas are signed by the particular students.*

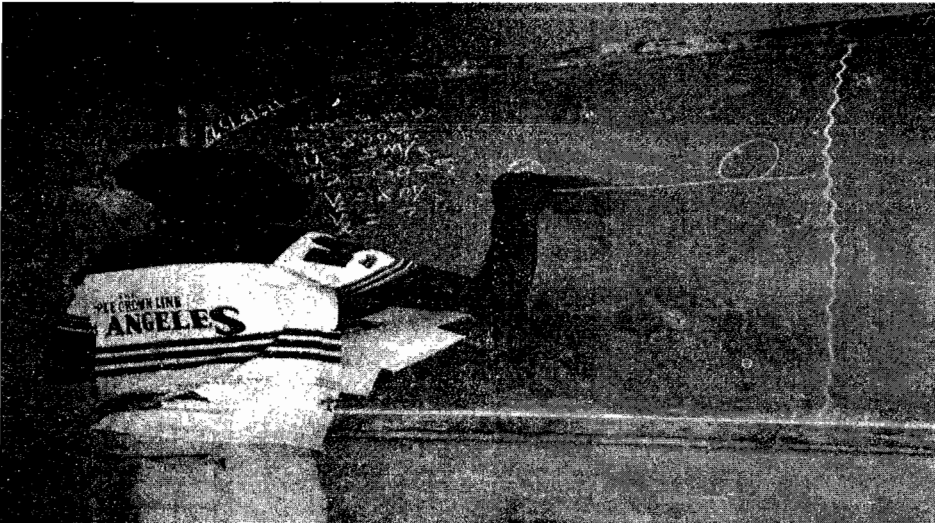
In the HDP the modules are arranged in a logical way. The assignments and questions, answers and comments sampled in the portfolio of each student gives a nice overview. Regular regional cluster-group moderation comments compare and tests the standards and quality. This phenomenon could be a challenge for good standards in The Netherlands: the accreditation moderation group visit each five year could complete a more balanced view on the standards in this case!

Students study time is more limited in time comparing the study time in the past. Their own responsibility has to be learned and most students are leaving their home village or home town to live in their own chosen 'residences'. Only on few locations, in The Netherlands Universities are providing in students' dormitories. There are tendencies that

students will stay longer at parents' home because the costs: the costs of the residence, study costs: books, papers, hand-outs, excursions, materials, monthly college-geld and social life.....

The Ministry of Education provides each student:

an "One-Year-Permit Card" on all public transportation in order to visit other "strong environments" like libraries and resources of other universities, specialized institutes and in order to join conferences, stages, exhibitions etc.



95% teacher effectiveness: explaining to others; Moderations in Bonga, may 2007

Some additional remarks

The programme is modulated. Practical exercises, training, and school placements are involved. Central guideline is described in the four **handbooks** each year. The items are arranged along themes. The handbook gives every week: knowledge and training of skills followed by assignments. Every theme starts with a central given lecture by a specialist on those specific themes. After that central given lecture the themes are 'worked-out' during the following week and the 'productions' are collected by the students and are assessed and evaluated. During the whole curriculum the main objectives are translated within this main – weekly - given – programme.

Most activities are integrated on this 'theme-of-the-week' and there is always a very strong relationship involved with regard to the activities of the school placements.

There are continuous work contacts between other Faculties of Education in The Netherlands to share experience, knowledge and ideas.

Male - female students

Comparing the situation on the Faculty of Education in Jimma Ethiopia with Education Faculties in the Netherlands there is a remarkable difference: the lack of male students in The Netherlands. The shift in The Netherlands has started fifteen years ago. The Ministry

of Education and Sciences and Faculties of Education cooperate to interest more male students.

The most remarkable difference: HDP could be mixed more equally in order to recruit more female students. In the Netherlands there is a lack of male students who join the faculties of education. Specialized studies and experiments in the Netherlands could not manage this inequality and is still concerning the faculties of education.

Evaluations and action research

Each eight weeks the program and the coaching of the leaders are investigated by a special office of the Faculty: 'quality and improvement'. The questionnaires are given to the students and they are asking to react. These office advices the compass-group and the curriculum group of the Faculty in order to improve the curriculum and guiding issues or 'atmosphere management'.

The 'field' of school representatives give their comment and advice during designing and implementation of new programmes. They also asked to evaluate the programme, students, leaders and the quality of communication and coaching of the Faculty.

Visitation-moderation accreditation group

On national level special groups of experts are visiting the different Faculties. The specific faculty has to make their 'evaluation report'. After that the visitation-group comes during some weeks and informs itself about the 'details' and has consultations with groups of students, leaders, staff, and representatives of the 'field' and the "groups with specialized tasks" within the organisation. After three months the visitation group sent its first report asking the Faculty to react. After be corrected the outcome of the moderations of all Educational Faculties on national level are published in magazines and internet in a rank. (We were so lucky: in 2003 to be the best in Arnhem, the faculty of Education in Nijmegen was number two: we got a lot of new students!!)

First we had to accustom to this way of evaluating and moderating. Several Faculties in The Netherlands were confronted with 'yellow' or 'red' cards. Nevertheless it has become an attitude now for every Faculty to achieve 'quality-standards'.

PABO Arnhem



Hogeschool
van Arnhem en Nijmegen

We learn

- 10 % by reading
- 20 % by hearing
- 30 % by seeing
- 50 % by seeing and hearing
- 70 % by discussing with others
- 80 % by personal experience
- 95 % by explaining to others

David Sousa

Multidisciplinary approach and
personal commitment

There are adapted curricula: full-time; part-time evening; there is the possibility to start each 1/2 year; there are evening courses; post-graduate studies.

The university has a year-time-table for all faculties; each faculty has its specialised study-guidebooks. There is a counsellor and students' psychologist. Atmosphere-management and clean surroundings contributes to the responsibility of each student with regard to the intended place of work.



Active learning methods : inspiring; Moderations in Mittu, May 2007

A learning organization

The University like to be a “learning” organisation. There are experts who can share their experience and skills and coach the new colleagues.

Coaching “junior” colleagues by senior's guarantees the sustainability of the identity and culture of the institute!!



Moderations in Bonga: HDP-lesson action research proposals; may 2007

The HDTs and HDP candidates are highly involved in the attitude of coaching and skills and knowledge. HDTs are involved in joining the weekly meetings of the HDLs, HDMs and HDC.

So they are introduced in a very natural way in the discussions about HDP and the passing issues:

The Faculty of Education constructs the yearly curriculum during three days of conference. All educators are available. The programme is prepared by the “compass-group” and “curriculum group”. The faculty wants to share experience with all participants in and outside.

The alumni policy means continuous evaluation and consultations with graduates of all “generations” to improve the curriculum and to connect them to “theirs” faculty. Conferences and workshops give a lot of special information: the effectiveness of the curriculum, coaching, leadership and atmosphere-management of the faculty.

On the internet site of the Jimma university the alumni policy has a serious and long existing tradition. The graduation ceremony of the HDP graduates means an introduction in the professional and collegial context of the teacher educator and hardly comparable.

III. student-Centered in Philippine Setting

Miss Maria Alona Ramos, M.A.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Philippines is located in Southeaster Asia, an archipelago between the Philippine Sea and South China Sea, east of Vietnam. Its capital is Manila and its main languages are Filipino as national language and English as an official language. As of July 2004, its population reached more than eighty-six (86) million. Eighty-three percent (83%) of its population are Roman Catholics and some religious sects are Protestants, Muslims, etc. Literacy in the Philippines which is defined as 'age 15 and over can read write' has improved a lot over the last few years, from seventy-two percent (72%) in 1960 to ninety-four percent (94%) in 1990.

The development of the Philippine education system has been heavily influenced by its colonial history, which has included periods of Spanish, American and Japanese colonization and occupation. During the period of American colonization, beginning in 1898, English was instituted as a language of instruction and a public school system was established and modeled on the US system. Private schools, colleges and universities were also established during this period.

There are three (3) levels of formal education in the Philippines. The educational ladder has a 6+4+4 structure i.e. 6 years of elementary / primary education, 4 years of secondary education, and typically 4 years to gain a bachelor's / tertiary education which is in 3 levels – undergraduate / collegiate, masters and doctorate.

2. MAIN TOPIC (STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING)

This presentation highlights how the Philippines, a developing country, embodies a learner- centered approach in its education framework. Things discussed here are focused on three main contributory factors to student-centered teaching i.e. school and community, teachers, and students. This is in particular, the experience of one of the private secondary schools in the Philippines.

***M.A. (Filipino, VSO Volunteer, HDP Moderator in Jimma University)

April 20, 2007 (Friday)

Seminar on Teachers Professional Development of Education Faculty

Faculty of Education, Jimma University, Jimma Ethiopia

2.a SCHOOL and COMMUNITY

The school's main goal is directed to student development and the provision of a well-rounded academic program. The school designs the programs to ensure academic success and head off academic problems. They involve students in many of the activities of running a school. Student needs are given priority over other concerns. The school makes an effort to serve all students **academically and mentally** (by hiring / employing competent teachers, LET (Licensure Examination for Teachers) Passers, flexible and adaptable to students' learning needs, responsible, enthusiastic and has a positive outlook towards his / her work as a teacher), **emotionally** (through the Guidance Office which monitors the students' family background, problems and for psychological support), **physically** (by conducting sports festival every year by the Office of the Coordinator of Student Services and through the Physical Education courses), **morally and spiritually** (for the public or state-run schools, they offer Values subject, but for the Catholic schools, they offer Christian Living subjects)

Moreover, the school closely and regularly monitors the performances of the teachers and staff. They recognize and award the teachers' effort and success. And they help improve teachers' skills and develop further and reflect on their practices through a **faculty development** which is given every week or every month depending on the school's program of activities.

The school also develops partnership with the **community**. They involve parents and community members in the teaching and learning activities of the school, and have them serve as resources to extend the efforts of the school. They make sure that parents are involved in all aspects of their children's learning. The school also teaches the students that they have a responsible part to play in society and that their contributions are valued and needed.

2.b Teachers

While the school and the community are doing their roles on the enhancement of their faculty and staff as well as that of the students in the school, the teachers too most especially should do their part on the student-centered teaching since they have the direct contact with the students. **It is the teachers' responsibility to:**

- . *provide focused and organized instructional sessions*
- . *communicate expectations to students*
- . *adapt instruction to students' needs*
- . *anticipate and correct student misconceptions*
- . *use a variety of teaching strategies with focus on student-centered approaches*
- . *closely and regular monitor students' performance*

How can the school be sure that teachers are doing these responsibilities for the students? The school assigns subject coordinators to check its teachers' performance. The following things are checked regularly by the subject coordinators:

1. Daily Lesson Plan of the Teachers; Check the following:

- Objectives (a. Cognitive – Concept / Knowledge; b. Affective – Values; c. Psychomotor – Skills)
- Grammar / Format / Neatness
- Lessons / Content (Is it in accordance to the teacher's syllabus?)
- Strategies (What student-centered methodologies or active learning methods used? Are those appropriate to the lessons being delivered?)
- Resources (Is the teacher creative enough to utilize the resources available?)
- Evaluation / Assessment used in assessing the students' learning
- Assignment / Homework

2. TQ (Test Questions) of the Teachers; Check the following before conducting an examination:

- Number of the items, Is it sufficient to the given amount of time?
- Levels of Question Complexity Based on Blooms' Taxonomy (Lower Order – Knowledge, Comprehension, Application; Higher Order – Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)
- TOS – Table of Specification (How many items are under the Knowledge level, Comprehension, etc.? There must be a balance among those levels in the lower order and higher order thinking skills)

3. Class Records (To check the students' grades in what?)

- Attendance
- Quizzes
- Participation and Involvement
- Project
- Preliminary Examination
- Final Examination

-This is in every grading period and there are 4 grading periods in the elementary and secondary levels in each school year. For the tertiary or college level, they are using the semestral periods and relatively, they have the same factors included in the grading system.

4. Most of all, the subject coordinators conduct lesson observations of the teachers every grading period. They observe the teacher on the following factors:

- **Teacher's Personality**
- **Teaching Procedure and Methodology**
- **Student – Teacher Interaction**
- **Classroom Management / General Observation**

-After the observation, there will be post-conference for feed backing purposes emphasizing on the good points of the teachers and the areas for improvement.

2.c Students

-If motivated, the students can have a **sense of ownership and control over the learning process and can learn with and from each other in safe and trusting learning environment.**

-Students desire **authentic relationships** where they are:

- trusted,
- given responsibility,
- spoke to honestly and warmly, and
- treated with dignity

THE UNTOLD PRINCIPLES IN EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND ACTIVE LEARNING...

1. Well-planned Lesson

The 7 Events of instruction

- 1.a Motivation
1. b Informing the learners of the objectives
1. c Stimulating recall of prerequisite learning
1. d Presenting the stimulus material
1. e Eliciting the desired behavior
1. f Providing feedback
1. g Assessing the behavior

2. Art of Questioning

- pose thought-provoking question (develop H-O-T-S or higher order thinking skills)
- challenge them, the more they think, the more they learn

3. Sense of Humor

- break monotony (be creative), it's hard but it is a skill

4. Element of Surprise

- make everyday a learning day for students, the more you create surprises the more they will look forward to tomorrows
- make an interesting task not a burden

5. Know your students by their First Names

- welcome them as part of the class, they feel accountable and part of the learning process

6. Be a role model to students

- preach what you teach
- the very important visual aid in the classroom is our very person

7. Communicate your rules

- first day of classes, get a class off on the right foot
- create a positive classroom atmosphere, roles of the teacher and the students must be clarified and communicated well, show that you mean business

8. Keep your energy levels high

- If teachers look gloomy they radiate negative energy
- you can't motivate if you feel unmotivated, energize yourself

9. Teacher Expressiveness

- be animated (teachers are great actors and actresses)
- command of the language is a requirement

10. Love your students

- practice "*cura personalis* – personal care", show that you really care, make them feel that they are loved and worth your love
- even if they don't learn your lesson at least they learn the values in life, and that's what matters most
- do what you want your students to remember you
- touch lives in the deepest way, you are not teaching just to deliver the goods, but most of all you teach weave their dreams and improve their lives

CONCLUSION:

The comparisons between the presentations made to that of the experiences in Ethiopian educational system can be done by enumerating its differences in question form:

- Is there a well-rounded academic program set by the university or even at the faculty level for the students? I.e. not only academically or mentally, but also emotionally, psychologically, physically, morally or spiritually? Are there offices that are taking care of the problems faced by the students in these aspects?
- Is there a faculty development conducted every month? How often does the faculty perform this for the continuous professional development of its faculty and staff?
- Is there a link between the faculty level with that of the community / parents of their students?
- Does the faculty assign a coordinator / supervisor in each department to check the performance of its teachers? I.e. Checking the lesson Plan / Course Outline of Teachers, Checking the Test Questions before conducting an examination, Checking the Class Record of the Teachers (evidence of the teachers if ever students fail and question their grades), and most of all Conducting Lesson Observations.
- How often does the faculty or the department level hold a meeting to discuss the issues and problems faced by the teachers with their students or any issues that need deliberation?
- What are the tools of evaluation to be used when considering promoting a teacher? What are its factors to be considered? For us, are the following factors:

- Evaluation from the his/her Subject Coordinator or Department Head
- Evaluation from his/her students conducted by an office (Guidance Office)
- Evaluation from his/her Principal/ Dean
- Seminars/ Trainings / Conventions attended
- Professional Growth (degrees earned)

There are a lot of differences which can be found in the educational system of the Philippines compared to Ethiopia. There is a need of huge / vast changes to be done to improve the Ethiopian educational system.