



BLOG BASED SELF VERIFICATION AND SELF DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM MODEL-A NOVEL APPROACH TO STUDENT CENTRIC LEARNING

K. Krishna Prasad

Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore, Karnataka

Abstract

Higher education has become a higher concentration of importance and competitive for students to get admission in top institutions for their interested concerned course. The expectations of students continuously change over time due to the advancement in communication technology, social networking sites and mass media, which demands for free learning. In present traditional education system learners neither change the content of the curriculum or courses depending on their varied interest. The aim of this paper is to provide self verification and self development of their curriculum based on continuous feedback through the concerned educational blog. This paper proposes a new model for student centric learning. As per the model subject wise every faculty has to create a blog in their subject name and should build a new community, which consists of all students and their parents. Students will continually interact with faculty, which includes their new interest regarding subject, feedback about the class. They can also give suggestion about the curriculum re-design or development. Faculty will reply for all the comments made by the students regularly and can also give assignment and mini project to students through the blog. The students will get their valued examination paper, scanned copy and they can self verify their marks. The meritorious student's achievements are published in the respective blog to encourage students. The feedback about the curriculum posted by the students is filtered at the end of the semester and put forward to the Board of Study (BOS) committee or syllabus revision panel committee. This paper helps to improve the student's knowledge in new communication technology and self learning ability. This model is best suited for online or distance mode- education system. We can also use this model to existing university or college or classroom based with regular courses.

Index Terms: Blog, Self Verification, Self Development Curriculum, BOS & Student Centric Learning

1. Introduction:

Higher education, after XII is very important for all students in their life, because it builds their carrier or life in respective path. Hundreds of professional courses are available at present and selecting right course, based on the interest of learner become critical or key decision making process in their life. In higher education we can observe national and global competition, but combined together produces 'positional goods' (Hirsch 1976) that creates access to social prestige and income earning [1-2]. Information technology has revolutionized and produced drastic changes or modifications in education system or curriculum. In distance education system, even though the student's expectations, taste continuously changes over time, most of the institutions or universities are not able to cater the student's requirements up to their expectations [3]. As institutions increasingly provide distance or e-learning customer relationship management becomes essential and important in order to sustain in the market [4].

In open or traditional educational system learners neither able to change the content of the curriculum nor courses depending on their varied interest. Blog is part of information technology development tool where the connected users of one group or

public can interact or comment on discrete entity called “post” usually displayed in reverse chronological order through world wide web. Peer feedback promotes reflection, deep thinking, writing and learning skills. A personal learning environment, act as a bridge between formal and informal learning with the help of social media, websites and blogs. It also helps to build students self regulated learning [5-6].

This paper proposes a new model of student centric learning system with the help of web blog. As per this model, each faculty member will create one blog and will maintain a group which involves all their students, parents, and colleagues. All the users should compulsory join the group before interacting or commenting to avoid unwanted comments. The blog can be used by students for multiple purposes like commenting about the class, asking doubts about a topic, suggestion regarding incorporation recent topics while revising syllabus. Faculty will reply for student’s comments frequently and also use it for giving assignments or mini projects. This model not only improves the student’s knowledge in new information technology tools but also helps to build their communication, writing, thinking and learning skills. This model can be effectively used by universities which wish to promote more and more distance learning or e-learning courses.

2. Related Research:

There is only few research articles are available in literature which speaks about blog in education system which helps in self development or verification curriculum. Many international educational institutions are promoting or implementing blog in their curriculum or education to improve the student’s teacher communication. Kim, H. N. (2008), studied shortcomings of computer mediated communication tools and how blogs can replace these shortcomings and also proposed a theoretical model of blog use in educational system Current educational blogs are not personalized or customized based on educational system [7]. Blog is one of the emerging information technology aids, which can be employed by educational institutions or universities in order to overcome the drawbacks of computer mediated communication tools (Divitini et al., 2005; Lin et al., 2006) [8]. Interactivity is most important for all students in order to improve their soft skills, Du and Wagner (2006) stated that blog helps to improve the interactivity among users and in educational blogs its among students [9].

Dickey, M. (2004) found that the use of blog helped to reduce the feelings of isolation unfriendliness and frustrations [10]. Williams. et.al. (2004) explored the blog as learning tool in higher education in university of the Brisbane Graduate School of Business at Queensland University of Technology and found that blogging has capacity or strength to be a transformational technology for teaching and learning [11]. Glogoff, S. (2005) concludes that blogging can be used in many ways to engage students more and more in discussion, exploration, investigation and discovery [12].

3. Objective and Methodology of the Study:

The main objective of this paper is to propose a novel model for student centric learning with the aid of blog, which helps in self development and curriculum. The sub objective is to propose new examination model. These two models will helps for all universities or institutions which looks forward for continuous changes and also more conscious about student centric learning system, especially through their open or distance courses. A conceptual methodology is used in this paper with the help of a model and is analyzed later through its Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOT Analysis).

4. Blog Based Self Verification and Self Development Curriculum Model:

In this model blog is primary and most important part of the curriculum. As shown in the figure 1 blog based curriculum model is surrounded or formed by six process as blog creation, group formation, blog posts, students feedback, Examination process, Syllabus updating.



Figure 1: Blog based self verification and self development curriculum model

4.1 Blog Creation:

Every teacher or faculty has to create one blog with a name, which includes name of the faculty and subject. If same subject is shared by multiple faculty means they share the blog or create their own.

4.2 Group Formation:

After creating the blog faculty will create a group. As shown in figure 2 blog is surrounded by different members as students, parents, and external members, includes colleagues or members from management, or any associations. Only registered group members can communicate each other. This eliminates unwanted or low rate comments. The unwanted, low rate comments are comments easily tracked by faculty member.

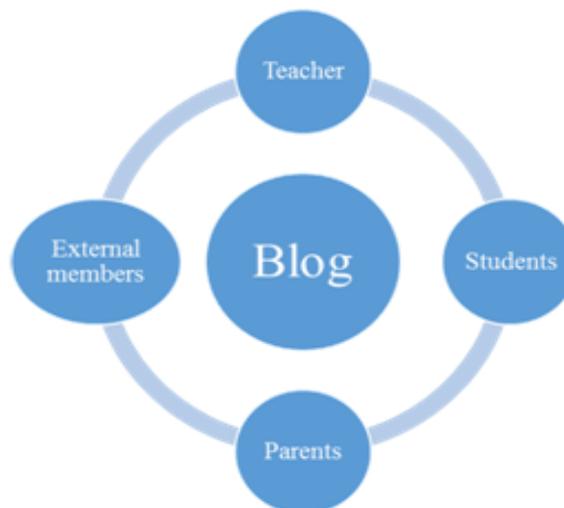


Figure 2: Blog and its members

4.3 Blog Posts:

Blog posts are created by faculty members. Blog post is an entity where blog creator will post some ideas. It can include text, picture, power point slides, videos and self video lecturing classes. This is most suitable for distance mode learning classes. Every day faculty should create at least one post. Faculty can use post in order to give assignments, mini projects etc.

4.4 Students Feed Back:

Students should have habit of viewing the post regularly or ever day basis. Without students this model is like “empty class- without any students”. Students can make positive comments or their opinions on blog posts. Students can also use the blog for clearing or clarifying their doubts. Students can give some opinions regarding syllabus up-gradation. Students will also give opportunity to build and design blogs. The meritorious student’s achievements are published in the respective blog to encourage students

4.5 Examination Process:

Every subject will be having internal marks and external marks. Examination pattern will be objective type and descriptive type. 50% marks for objective type and 50% marks for descriptive examination. As shown in figure examination pattern consists of internal and external examinations. Internal examinations are conducted by Faculty member. Internal examinations includes assignments, mini projects etc. Marks allotment and credit for each paper is not discussed here. Credit allotment is decided by university or depending on course. For internal examination 30% marks is allotted and for external examination 70 % marks is allotted. Both internal and external examinations 50% marks are allotted for objective type examination and 50% marks are allotted for descriptive type examination. In internal examination descriptive type paper first valuation is done by students. Answer papers are shuffled and each student will get one answer paper. While distributing answer paper students will not get their own paper, for this special care is taken. Student’s valuation marks are not final, that is again valued by concerned faculty. Only scanned copy of the answer paper is sent to email-id for valuation purpose and this is informed to students through the blog. The scanned copy is coded; students will not come to know the owner of the answer paper. Scanned copy of external examination’s also sent to student’s email-id, if student’s not applying for re-valuation. This way student will also come to know about valuation process and they can do self verification of their answer paper.

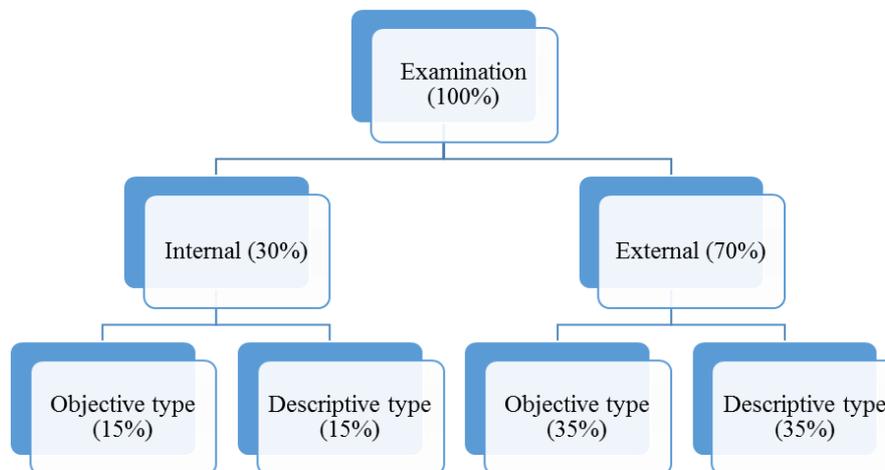


Figure 3: Examination Pattern

4.6 Syllabus Up-Gradation:

All the comments, opinions given by the students are collected, recorded and scrutinized by the faculty and at the end of the academic year passed to Board of studies (BOS) chairman. The faculty should properly scrutinize the opinions received by the students before handing over to BOS. Students will be given importance or focused in syllabus revision or updating process. Hence this model is referred as self curriculum development model.

5. Analysis of the Model:

The 'Blog based self verification and self development curriculum model' is analyzed using its Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Challenges.

Strengths:

- ✓ Students will come to know about new information technology communication tools.
- ✓ Students will get knowledge in valuation process.
- ✓ Student's communication skill will be enhanced.
- ✓ Between student and faculty One-to-one communication is built
- ✓ Peer feedback promotes reflection, deep thinking, writing and learning skills
- ✓ Improves critical and analytical thinking.
- ✓ Students will get increased exposure to quality and latest contents in respective subject
- ✓ Students reading habits can be improved
- ✓ Makes education focused on demand
- ✓ Ubiquitous learning facility-anywhere, anytime , anyplace
- ✓ Students get encouraged because their achievement is viewed by many members through blog

Weaknesses:

- ✓ Individuality will be lost. The comments made by one student can be viewed by others also
- ✓ Faculty work is doubled and involves lot of efforts to maintain the quality of the blog or site.
- ✓ Unavailability of internet services in rural places.
- ✓ Once students get connected to the blog, their mind sometimes easily get diverted due to fancy virtual world in internet
- ✓ Lack of speaking and listening skills
- ✓ Lack of technology awareness and skills
- ✓ University or Institutional clerks gets more work

Opportunities:

- ✓ Distance and e-learning education can be more popularized.
- ✓ Students gets earning facility, through writing comments, and viewing blogs, they get blogging knowledge. Some sites pays for Blog writing.
- ✓ Learning material can be easily reached to students
- ✓ Students gets opportunity and exposure to smart learning tools
- ✓ Opportunity to involve in Academic or curriculum work
- ✓ Improves branding of the material and courses
- ✓ Opportunity to get more and more people/student network especially in distance learning.

Threats:

- ✓ When internet is compulsory for blog, students easily get diverted to entertainment or unwanted topics.

- ✓ Lack of confidentiality in examination process
- ✓ Lack of technology support
- ✓ Lack of synchronization or customization of educational blogs
- ✓ Threats to class room based education system
- ✓ Lack of student faculty eye to eye contact

6. Conclusion:

As higher education has become more and more competitive day by day, some technological changes become compulsory or necessary. In this context, educational blogs have become a new topic. As students' taste and interest are changing regularly, student-centric learning should be given more emphasis. In student-centric learning, more focus is given to learning autonomy and independence.

Blog-based self-verification and self-development curriculum model proposed in this paper focuses more on student's interest, acknowledging student's opinion as central to the learning experience. In this model, teacher/faculty becomes only a facilitator of learning for individual students. Student's opinion about syllabus revision or updating is one of the greatest characteristics of student-centric learning. The feedback about the curriculum posted by the students is scrutinized at the end of the academic year and put forward to the Board of Study (BOS) committee or syllabus revision panel committee. This paper helps to improve the student's knowledge in new communication technology and also improves self-learning writing skills. This model is best suited for online or distance mode-education system. Wish this paper could play an active and supportive role for all universities or institutions which look forward for continuous or drastic changes by adopting new communication technology.

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