

Student-Centered and Constructivist Approaches in Learning

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Abstract

This article discusses two student-centered learning approaches, namely student-centered learning and constructivism, both of which aim to increase student engagement and understanding in the learning process. The student-centered approach places students at the center of learning activities, where teachers act as facilitators who support students in developing their own knowledge. Students are given the freedom to explore, ask questions, and work in groups. On the other hand, constructivism, pioneered by Piaget and Vygotsky, focuses on how students construct knowledge through experience and interaction with their surroundings. Learning in this approach encourages students to actively explore, discuss, and reflect on the concepts being studied. This article also compares the two approaches, showing their similarities in supporting active and in-depth learning. These two approaches complement each other, with student-centered learning providing space for students to participate actively, while constructivism guides how students construct and understand knowledge in a more meaningful way. The implementation of these two approaches is expected to create a more dynamic and effective learning environment for developing students' critical and creative thinking skills.

Keywords: student-centered learning, constructivism, active learning, skill development, the role of teachers as facilitators

Introduction

Effective learning must be able to meet the needs and characteristics of students. The student-centered and constructivist approaches are two paradigms that are increasingly popular in the world of education. Both emphasize the active role of students in the learning process, allowing them to build knowledge through experience and interaction.

In the world of education, learning approaches that place students at the center of learning activities are increasingly being implemented. Two approaches that are often discussed in this context are student-centered learning and constructivism.

Student-Centered Approach

Student-centered learning emphasizes the active role of students in the learning process. In this approach, teachers are no longer the main source of information, but rather facilitators who help students develop their own knowledge. Students are given the freedom to explore ideas, ask questions, and work in groups to solve problems. This approach encourages the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and independence in learning.

In practice, this method can involve group discussions, problem-based learning projects, and assessments that emphasize the learning process rather than just the final results. Learning becomes more personalized, as students can choose topics or learning methods that suit their individual interests and learning styles.

Constructivist Approach

Constructivism, pioneered by figures such as Piaget and Vygotsky, considers learning to be an active process in which students construct their own knowledge through experience and interaction with their surroundings. From a constructivist perspective, students do not simply receive information, but rather construct meaning from that information based on their prior experiences and relevant contexts.

This approach encourages students to explore knowledge through experimentation, discussion, and reflection. Teachers act as mediators who provide challenging situations and tasks to stimulate students' critical thinking. This process helps students understand concepts in depth and in an applicable way, rather than just memorizing facts.

Comparisons and Relationships

Although both approaches focus on developing students as active learners, the student-centered approach emphasizes the role of students in determining the direction of learning, while constructivism focuses more on how students construct knowledge gradually and actively. These two approaches complement each other, where student-centered learning provides space for students to construct knowledge more effectively.

Conclusion

Both approaches, student-centered and constructivism, share the same goal of increasing student engagement and understanding in the learning process. By implementing these approaches, education can create a more dynamic and in-depth environment, where students not only master knowledge, but also develop the critical skills needed in everyday life.

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