Innovative Teaching Strategies that meet the needs of all Students

by

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Abstract

This project work was prepared to explore innovative teaching strategies for rural Indian primary schools with an intention to prepare a grade one to five handbook for teachers. The design was based on the British Columbia (BC) curriculum model developed in Canada on the basis of innovative teaching strategies. Most of the rural Indian primary school use the traditional teaching strategies; these out-dated strategies are ones that I experienced both as a student and teacher. These teaching strategies did not help the teachers engage students in the classroom. My experiences and a strong concern about today’s students in rural India were the driving forces behind this research project. I hope this handbook will be helpful in providing a new path for the rural Indian primary school teachers. I believe this research project will result in (a) providing innovative teaching strategies to rural Indian school teachers and (b) more engaged students in rural Indian classrooms.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of the Study

I am a lifelong learner. I was born and brought up in a rural area of the Punjab (India) and completed my primary and secondary school education in a rural school. In India, most of the population live in villages, and they do not get the necessities found in urban areas such as education and healthcare facilities. Both good education and a healthy population play crucial roles in the development of the country. There are, however, vast differences between rural and urban areas. When I was in primary school, I faced many problems. I was a slow learner; I did not understand what was going on in the class. I had no interest in the classroom because mathematics, English, and science were all difficult subjects. I tried to remember the mathematical and scientific formulas by cramming because teachers did not teach the logic behind any of the formulas. I always received average achievement scores in classes.

During this time, teachers did not notice the intellectual level of students, and most of the time they used teacher-centred strategies of teaching. Teachers had a focus on simply completing the syllabus. They did not care about the students, and that is why the students did not interest themselves in their studies. Students always just focused on getting passing marks in the annual examinations to earn admission into the next class. The examination was conducted by a state education board in the fifth standard, and for those students who were average and below average, some would drop out of school and others would fail the examination.

Another two aspects of my life are related to (a) my family background and (b) my professional life; both have always kept me connected to education issues. The profession of my parents is teaching, which is a noble profession. My parents spent their lives teaching students who, due to poverty, were not able to pay school fees. I wanted improvements in the
education system, and the dedication of my parents to their profession inspired me to become a teacher. After completing my education, I started to teach in a primary school in my village. When I went to the school on the first day, I was surprised because everything was the same as when I was a student. There appeared to be no changes in the education system after 22 years. Teachers were following the same structure of education. I was shocked because the government made so many educational policy changes in the past 20 years; those changes were not evident in the school. When I taught the students, I noticed that they had a similar situation as mine. They were confused and had no concentration in class because I used the old teaching methods that I learned during my Bachelor of Education program. “Personal experience is all the experience we ever have” (Beauchamp & Parsons, 2000, p. 7). These problems that I witnessed in students at this time early in my teaching career inspired me to do something in life. So, the focus of my efforts was to reform the education system of primary schools in rural India. “Education is a powerful instrument for reducing poverty and inequality, improving health and social well-being, and laying the groundwork for sustained economic growth” (Bhat, 2013, p.1). According to Sharma (2009), primary education is an important human right that helps the individual and social development of children (Kaushik, Shah, Chavan, Dyer, Ramachandran, & Sharma, 2009).

In India, the level of primary education is very low. Students do not get the basic facilities or resources in the schools. Teachers continue to use old methods of teaching and students do not like to come to school. Teaching methods are those strategies that can make education interesting or boring for students. It is a teacher’s responsibility to make the difficult subjects interesting; only then will students completely involve themselves in classroom activities. New techniques help the students polish their skills and more easily learn the difficult concepts of mathematics and science.
Today, it is important that teachers learn to use a variety of teaching methods to cater to the range of learning needs and requirements that are present within a class. Impressive teaching methods make students interested in their studies. On the other hand, explanation and lecture methods are not useful for primary school students. Effective teaching methods make the teaching interesting and engage the students in the learning process; they also help them develop critical thinking skills. Classroom activities help the students develop their confidence to ask questions without any hesitation. I chose this topic because as a student of the Master of Education in Educational Leadership program at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, I visited public schools in Nanaimo and experienced that India and Canada have different types of education systems and different teaching methods. Both traditional and modern teaching methods have negative and positive aspects. I do not deny that traditional ways are also used to teach some subjects like history, political science, and geography, but there is a need to have a balance between traditional and modern methods to improve education.

In the field of education, teaching strategies are the basis of the learning experience. Teaching is an art, and teaching techniques help teachers make learning an impressive experience. Innovative ways of teaching attract students to participate in class activities; they gain knowledge through engaging teaching methods and do not feel stressed. The combination of traditional and modern teaching methods can be implemented in primary schools. This will be helpful for the overall development of all students, not just those in private schools that use advanced teaching techniques. These techniques will be helpful to improve the education in Indian primary public schools. Teachers can use these techniques to enhance student learning and to broaden the area of teaching.
Context

Primary education is the first step of the educational ladder. It is very important for children’s overall development as they grow to become successful human beings later in life. In my experience, most of the parents are illiterate in rural areas of India, and they do not send their children to school. Those who go to school and stay in school until the fifth standard do not learn the basics of reading and writing. The public school system is divided into two zones: Outstanding access and poor education. In public primary schools, most of the students gain admission late according to their age. Another aspect is that they do not receive the basic facilities or required resources in these schools, and teachers do not evaluate the mental and intellectual levels of the students. They do not use the appropriate techniques to pique students’ interest in their studies. My focus, therefore, is to improve the level of primary education in India. Teaching strategies are among the most important aspects that help to improve the level of education.

The purpose of this study is to develop effective ways to reform the education system of primary schools in India. I believe that every student who enters my classroom can succeed. As a teacher, it is my duty to help students reach their full potential and gain the knowledge and skills they require in their daily lives as citizens of a democratic society. I believe that every student has something to teach me. To facilitate the sharing of ideas by the students, I wish that all teachers develop a safe atmosphere where students feel that their thoughts and opinions are valued. I believe that education should be relevant and interesting. Today, there is a need to know about the new methods of teaching that will describe the true purpose of education. Effective teaching methods make teaching interesting and engage students in the learning process; they help them develop critical thinking skills. We need to shift the traditional teaching methods to modern teaching strategies. If we try to change the
teaching system, the outcomes of new teaching methods will help to engage the students in the class and improve their learning capabilities.

**Justification of the Study**

“Teaching is not just curriculum and instruction. It’s also managing the classroom, motivating students to learn, and meeting their individual needs, including the needs of students who display chronic personal or behavioural problems” (Brophy, 1996, p. 3). There are many issues that primary schools in India face: Friction between students and teachers, old teaching strategies, disengagement of students in the classroom, the behaviour of students, and political pressure. The lack of student engagement is the first issue that has motivated me to research new teaching methods that will be helpful to improve student learning. “Student engagement is the glue, or mediator, that links important contexts—home, school, peers, and community—to students and, in turn, to outcomes of interest” (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012, p. 3). Student engagement is highly important in the academic field and helps the students achieve their goals in life. But the students’ social-emotional (Christenson et al., p. 3) and behavioural problems affect their learning outcomes and increase the dropout rate in the starting days of school.

In recent years, the education system has been shifting and the role of teachers has been changing. Students are becoming more dependent on technology for educational needs, and they like to access the internet to collect information rather than taking advice from teachers. Sometimes, all these issues create friction in the student-teacher relationship. In my experience as a teacher, students lack patience, and they cannot tolerate the interference of teachers and parents in their lives. They do not follow the classroom discipline, and create chaos in a classroom. In my grade five class, students who had no interest in social studies always disturbed and distracted the other students. This type of student behaviour affected the learning environment of the class.
People have also become more self-centred and modernized. They do not like the interference of others in their lives. This social atmosphere influences the students. The behaviour of children with teachers and parents has changed. They want to live alone according to their choice. Sometimes family problems change the behaviour of children and they do not like to talk with their parents. All these things are happening in schools (Scarlett, 1998). There are clashes in the teacher-student relationships. This creates a gap between the learners and instructors. Disrespectful behaviour certainly weakens the bonding between the teacher and students. Nelson (2009) notes that sometimes teachers blame students for classroom problems, and most of the time, teachers try to ignore them. They rebuke students in front of classmates, and this public scolding certainly makes the students feel embarrassed. They misbehave with their teachers. “Sometimes things are going on in their lives that teachers do not know about. They’re anxious, upset, or angry because of these things, and it comes out in the classroom” (Nelson, 2009, p.1) Teachers do not understand the students’ psychological condition, and they feel stress coming to school. Students do not like to interact with their teachers. Emotional conflict is related to the mental condition of the students. Those students who misbehave with their teachers and other students have an emotional problem that originates elsewhere. Sometimes teachers ignore the emotionally fragile students, and the students become angry and do not concentrate in the class. Personal problems of teachers and students have a bad effect on the teacher-student relationship (Yamashiro, & Noam, 2013). Another fact is that due to the political influence on the education system, there is a lack of change in the teaching strategies being used. The management and teachers cannot change the teaching strategies in schools without the permission of the higher authorities. Education is the area which has been dominated by the experts as compared to other areas of public policy. The political system has an impact on school policy planning, and it also affects the students’ development. All school activities and
decisions depend upon the authorities in the school. School principals make rules such as modifications in the school curriculum and disciplinary rules for both teachers and students; principals need the approval of the district school officer to implement new rules in the schools.

Teachers, therefore, are not free to adopt the unique strategies of other countries. The teachers have a burden of assessments and grades for the students. The curriculum in the Indian education system is vast. The teachers do not have time to implement these techniques to improve the learning. They need time to complete the lessons instead of assessing the learning of the students. Students are taught what to learn instead of how to learn. The participation of the community and parents is almost negligible in Indian schools. Sometimes the unprofessional behaviour of teachers also creates a hindrance in the growth of the students. The infrastructure and facilities provided, especially in public schools, are of poor quality. Decades-old traditional ways of planning lessons and delivering lectures and the same assessment tools and examination patterns are some of the old ways to impart education in schools, and every Indian state government creates a new educational pattern to improve the teaching strategies.

Since ancient days, education systems have been changing according to the development of each country. In my opinion, in the global context, education systems are failing in developing countries. Most of the countries focus on a teacher-centred education system. There is no space for students’ interests. Students put all their focus on the teacher; the teacher talks and students follow the instructions. Acquiring a learner-centred approach inspires me because I have always used traditional methods of teaching due to the impact of a decades-old Indian education system and because it is compulsory in the schools. Teachers always use textbooks for learning, as they believe it is a more effective way of teaching. Rote learning and theoretical curriculum are the prevailing trends in the current system. These do
not develop extensive logical thinking, and there is a need to get rid of these trends.

Secondly, the Indian education system insists substantially on examinations, which need to be moulded. Teachers have always focused on completion of the syllabus, and they have no intention of creating logical thinking in students. Monthly examinations sometimes become nightmares for the learners, and the fear of not living up to the expectations of parents makes them more stressful. This can negatively impact the emotional potential of the students. Sometimes children commit suicide because they do not fulfil their parents’ desires. Since students must pass their examinations to enter the next class, co-curricular activities are neglected; that is a significant part of a child’s development. There were no activities in the class, and the only purpose of teachers was to prepare the students for final examinations. Students always felt tired and did not like to come to school because they did not like the theory work in class. So, all teachers and students only craved high marks, and they hardly cared about the personal interests of the students. Knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and emotions are all involved in the distribution of education, and these are also straightforward factors affecting learning results. Another factor affecting learning results is students’ learning motivation; learning motivation is the driving force of learning, and active and strong learning motivation leads to better learning results (Chang & Chang, 2012). There is a need to motivate the students. Effective teaching strategies help to motivate students and enhance their learning.

**Definition of Terms**

**Indian school education.** The Indian education system is divided into two parts, public and private. Public schools provide free and compulsory education for all students, and private school education is costly because private schools are run by business organizations. The whole education system revolves around the State Education Board and the Central Education Board. The Central Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Indian
School Certificate Examination make the curriculum and educational policies, which are implemented in all Indian government and private schools. Every state has its state government boards, which manage the school education in every school. There are three levels of school education: Primary education, secondary education, and higher secondary education.

**Primary education.** Primary education is the first period of formal school education. The first five grades are the main part of public school education. The Indian government provides free primary education for all students. The main purpose of primary education is to inculcate the basic understanding of different subjects and skills that will be helpful in further life.

**Teaching strategies.** Teaching methods are principles and techniques that are used by teachers to make the students’ learning effective. These techniques are related to curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers choose teaching methods according to subjects and students’ interest. There are two main approaches, teacher centred and student centred, which are used to teach the students in classrooms.

**Student engagement.** Student engagement is related to the willingness of a student to take part in daily school activities like attending classes, following school rules and regulations, and participating in classes and extra co-curricular activities.

**Curriculum.** In the school context, the curriculum is the academic syllabus that gives directions to teachers and students. The curriculum is pre-planning to teach the students, such as dividing the syllabus into parts, teaching methods, study methods, presentations, and monthly examinations.

**Research Question for This Study**

The level of primary education is very poor in the rural Indian public primary schools. Students from poor families are incapable of getting an education in private schools. Public
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schools, therefore, play an important role in increasing the literacy rate. However, there is no systematic approach to improve the teaching methods, which is very important to enhance the student learning and student engagement in the classroom. In education, student engagement is related to the degree of attention, curiosity, and interest that students show when they are learning in the classroom. Student engagement improves the learning of students when they have concentration in the classroom. In India, most of the schools use the old ways of teaching; teachers cannot make positive connections with students, and students feel bored in the classroom. Every year the government makes many policies to improve the education system, but these policies are not implemented on the ground level. As an educational leader, I want to contribute to improve the teaching methods, which are the most important part of the education system. My research question is: What teaching strategies can be used to engage students in rural Indian primary schools?

A Brief Overview of the Study

My study is about the impressive teaching strategies that will be helpful to engage students in the rural Indian primary schools. Teaching strategies are an extremely wide topic, and I am still in the process of refining it. My first step towards my research will be to analyse literature on the topic deeply. It will be better if I try to know the realities of the issue and reasons behind them. There is a need for improvement in teaching methods. This study of the education system and the teaching strategies of British Columbia, Canada will include five chapters. This has proved the importance of teaching strategies in the Indian primary schools, and it will further help to differentiate both countries’ teaching methods.

This first chapter is the introduction to my topic. The chapter reveals the topic and its basic concerns. The chapter provides a guiding route to readers. It also gives the purpose of my study and justification as to why I chose teaching strategies as my research. Chapter Two is the literature review, which explains the complete topic and provides grounding for further
research. Chapter Three makes connections between the literature review and the design research presented in the fourth chapter. It describes the rationale for my research and provides the justification for my approach towards teaching strategies through a handbook for school teachers. In this handbook, I will design a lesson plan to describe the new teaching strategies for different teaching subjects. Chapter Four outlines the designed handbook for teachers. In the handbook will be methodology to modify teaching techniques at the primary educational level. It will also include the new teaching methods that can be adopted in Indian primary public schools to enhance the students’ engagement in the classroom and increase their attendance at school. The last chapter will summarize the study with the positive and negative aspects of teaching strategies being discussed. This concluding chapter will address both the strengths and the limitations of the methods that could be helpful to improve primary education.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Importance of Teaching Methods

Teaching methods play a key role in students’ critical learning. Today, it is important that teachers learn to use a variety of teaching methods in order to cater to the range of learning needs and requirements that are present within most classes. Impressive teaching methods pique students’ interest in studying. On the other hand, explanation and lecture methods are not useful for high school students. Effective teaching methods make the teaching interesting, engage the students in the learning process, and help them develop critical thinking skills. Teaching methods are useful to create discipline in auditorium settings with large groups of students. Classroom activities help the students develop their confidence and motivate them to come up with questions without any hesitation. I chose this topic because India and Canada have different types of education systems, and the teaching methods are also different. Mostly in public schools, teachers use the traditional ways of teaching in India. I do not deny that traditional ways are useful to teach some subjects like history, political science, and geography, but there is a need to make a balance of traditional and modern methods for the improvement of education.

Crawford, Mathews, Makinster, and Saul (2005) comment,

Teaching is more than a set of methods. Teaching well means addressing a set of objectives, for a particular group of students, at a certain point in the school year, with certain resources, within a particular time frame, in a particular school and community setting. It means finding a balance between direct instruction and orchestrating the activities of individuals and groups of students. It means developing students’ skills and strategies for learning at the same time they learn the content of the curriculum.

(p. 10)
Teaching strategies are the basis of education. If the way of teaching is not appropriate, students will not effectively obtain knowledge. Teaching is an art, and teaching techniques help the teachers make it impressive. “Artful teachers approach the subject matter not as static knowledge or inert ideas, but as ways of knowing. These techniques help the students to think about a particular topic and ask questions and create new ideas in mind” (Crawford et al., 2005, p. 10). Innovative ways of teaching attract students to participate in class activities; they gain knowledge through play and do not feel stressed. The combination of traditional and modern teaching methods can be implemented in all schools. It will be helpful for the overall development of the students because if private schools use advanced techniques of teaching, so can public schools. These techniques will be helpful in improving the public primary schools. This will be a chance for teachers to learn new teaching skills and increase their professional skills.

There is a disconnection between the traditional school model and the challenges and opportunities of today’s world. How do we reconceptualize learning to move beyond passive student roles of recording and recalling? The world beyond the school walls demands adaptive, creative problem solvers. (Zmuda, Curtis, & Ullman, 2015)

In the modern scenario, most teachers are looking to change the teaching strategies to improve students’ reading and writing skills for logical thinking. They want to develop critical thinking in their students and challenge them to ask questions, observe, create new ideas, discuss, and interpret in their classes. Teachers think this type of teaching and learning engages the students in active learning. In the active classes, students are fully engaged, and they easily learn all the tough concepts. In active classrooms, students know what they are learning and how they can implement their knowledge in actual situations in life. In my opinion, in the active learning classroom, both teachers and students are the centre of education; they share their responsibility and help each other to create a cooperative
atmosphere in the classroom, and then they can freely support each other’s ideas. In the kind of teaching strategies where teachers and students are both in the centre point, they observe each other’s way of thinking instead of ideas. Most of the teaching strategies should be inquiry based and emphasize the reasons behind the problem. As Crawford et al. (2005) comment,

The teacher and students use high-level questions (not just “What?” “Where?” and “When?” but “Why?” “What if?” and “Why not?”) as they analyse problems and make decisions. Students take certain roles in activities as they practice different kinds of thinking; they make predictions, gather information, organize the information and question conclusions. (p. 7)

“Learning a new teaching method is like learning a new move in sports—you have to see it done. Try it out in front of someone who knows how to do it and get suggestions to improve your performance” (Crawford et al., 2005, p. 9). First, teachers need to prepare before implementing new teaching methods in the classroom. They need to attend workshops and discuss with their colleagues how to conduct classes and how they can use teaching methods impressively. They need to prepare lesson plans and then use them in the classroom. This will be helpful to manage the classroom environment because preplanning always helps the teachers to maintain discipline and create students’ interest in studying. “Teaching involves passing on (and reinforcing) knowledge, skills, and understanding, and they have identified three types of teaching strategy: Informing, reinforcing, and supporting learning” (Gipps, McCallum, & Hargreaves, 2000, p. 33). Teachers have life experience, and when they teach the students, they describe different subject topics with the help of their life experience. In the first method, informing, teachers just pass on similar information. Teachers use seven methods to pass on information to the students: Relaying knowledge, explaining, instructing, relaying ways of learning, modelling, demonstrating, and conveying examples of
children’s work. Teachers give knowledge to the students that is reliable for them and
describes the subject matter, definition, and general knowledge related to the topic because if
the students have no interest in the topic, they just listen to the information that is enough for
them. Most teachers use the explaining method; they describe the information with the help
of examples and illustrations. “Teachers described how they spelled out and clarified what
something means, ‘how something works;’ by rephrasing information, repeating information,
or interpreting one child’s answer for the rest of the class” (Gipps et al., 2000). Teachers give
instructions and commands on a particular subject they are instructing; sometimes when
teachers behave strictly, they use this method. Modelling means the teacher describes
examples as though he/she is the main subject of every story and example.

The second teaching method is reinforcing, and teachers use five methods to reinforce
learning (Gipps et al., 2000). When the teacher teaches in the class, he/she just repeats the
important information for students to memorize. The five reinforcement categories are:
Reminding, repeating, re-demonstrating, directing to further practice, and directing a child to
help or teach another child. Reminding and repeating are the same oral teaching strategies
that the teacher uses throughout the lesson. The previous lesson is reminded and repeated by
the teacher to make a connection between two chapters, and it is easy for students to
remember the important knowledge. Some teachers repeat all the basic points at the end of
the class, and they give an opportunity to the students to ask questions. Some teachers write
down notes on the whiteboard. Re-demonstrating is related to practising something new. “Re-
demonstrating was used to show children (again) how to tackle a task, how to use an item of
equipment, how to make a construction of some kind or how to record something” (Gipps et
al., 2000, p. 53). This method is useful for slow learners because the teacher demonstrates the
information in different ways. Directing students to further practice is related to practising
particular lessons or math formulas. When the teacher knows the majority of the class failed
to complete the task, then he/she uses another way to teach the students and tries some practical and theoretical ways so that students understand the concept of the topic.

One teacher describes the experience:

If there is something that they have to think about a lot, rather than me just tell them how to do it, I would pose a question in such a way that it leads them to think . . . ‘What would you do? ‘What if you did it this way?’ So I am starting to get to think . . . . They start thinking and reflecting themselves. (Gipps et al., 2000)

**Personalized Learning**

“Personalized learning is an umbrella term under which many practices fit, each designed to accelerate student learning by tailoring instruction to individuals’ needs and skills as they go about fulfilling curricular requirements”(Kallick & Zmuda, 2017, p. 1). It refers to the personal attention provided by the teacher to every student. “This account implies that personalised learning depends on both effective teacher differentiation of a set curriculum to address the diversity of learner needs and the development of independent learner capacities” (Prain et al., 2013). Personalized learning is the best way to motivate and support students for their personal needs. It is a well-known fact that the intelligence level and power of capturing education is different for different students. All students cannot learn at the same pace. Personalized learning focuses on enhancing student engagement in learning and giving students choices. “By personalized learning, we simply mean that student learning experiences—what they learn, and how, when, and where they learn it—are tailored to their individual needs, skills, and interests, and that their school enables them to take ownership of their learning” (Childress & Benson, 2014, p. 34). The learning is focused on lifelong progress. The plans are formulated by the management, and the teachers keep in mind the needs and interests of students, involving students in reflections about what they have learned in the class. Personalized learning helps students to pursue ambitions, detect problems, and
solve them. “There are four defining attributes of personalized learning, each of which can be used as a filter to examine existing classroom practices or construct new ones. There are voice, co-creation, social construction, and self-discovery” (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017, pp. 2-3).

There are some key points that show that learning becomes more personalized as students are engaged in the classroom; students are more responsible for their learning and behaviour with their peers and teachers (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 5). “But personalization is not just a better mousetrap to achieve the same goals as past models of teaching and learning, nor is it simply a new delivery vehicle that achieves the same goals” (Zmuda et al., 2015, p. 7). Teachers play a role as curators in personalized learning. Teachers help the students set their weekly targets, and teachers pay attention to students’ moments as they are seriously doing their projects.

Teachers have more focus on competency-based learning and self-directed learning so that students can enhance their capability to make decisions and achieve targets (Childress & Benson, 2014). Another aspect of personalized learning is that shifting the design of schooling is not personalization learning, but it should be a combination of modern technology. The traditional classroom is not appropriate for all the students and educators; they cannot create students’ interest in all the classroom activities. Technology plays a great role in enhancing personalized learning in the modern classroom. In the personalized classroom, e-learning helps to track and achieve the educational needs of all students. They can get information anywhere, anytime, and there is no restriction to attending the classes.

According to Zmuda et al. (2015),

> Personalized learning requires not only a shift in the design of schooling but also a leveraging of modern technologies. Personalization cannot take place at scale without technology. Personalized learning is enabled by smart e-learning systems, which help dynamically track and manage the learning needs of all students, and provides a platform to access myriad engaging learning content, resources and learning
opportunities needed to meet each student’s needs everywhere at any time, but which are not all available within the four walls of the traditional classroom. (p. 8)

Place-based learning also forms a part of personalized learning, in which learning experiences are adapted to the local environment. “Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum” (Sobel, 2014, p. 6). Place-based learning motivates students to connect with the community and learn through real-life experiences. Any successful education system depends upon the environmental inquiry-based and place-based education (Skoutajan, 2012). According to the Skoutajan, place-based learning connects the situations that are happening outside the classroom with the topics that are taught in the classroom. This teaching strategy helps the students’ overall development and makes them more innovative. Place-based learning helps the students become more realistic. It helps them solve the problems of their personal lives. “Clearly, there is a strong case to be made for turning our schools into community hubs where students can learn through authentic, meaningful and practical experiences.” (Skoutajan, 2012, p. 35).

Place-based learning is similar to the Vedic Indian education system. Teachers live in the forests and students come to get educated. Teachers teach the students in the natural environment, and they get information about social and professional life. Dewey (1959) described the disconnection between the school and the real world:

From the standpoint of the child, the great waste in the school comes from his inability to utilize the experiences he gets outside the school in any complete and free way within the school itself; while on the other hand, he is unable to apply in daily life what he is learning at school. That is the isolation of the school, its isolation from life. When the child gets into the schoolroom he has to put out of his mind a large part
of the ideas, interests, and activities that predominate in his home and neighbourhood.

So the school, being unable to utilize this everyday experience, sets painfully to work, on another tack and by a variety of means, to arouse in the child an interest in school studies. (pp. 76-78)

In schools, teachers should use teaching strategies that connect the students with society and provide them a natural learning environment. Some students think they are not getting the knowledge that will be important in their further lives so that they prefer to drop out of school. In place-based learning, the curriculum is a combination of theoretical knowledge and personal life experience. In place-based learning, teachers teach natural studies, cultural studies, and real-world problem solving. In cultural studies, teachers give projects to investigate the local culture and history, and these two aspects are directly related to their lives. Researching culture and history is a good opportunity for students to closely experience the lives of the community and their families. In natural studies, students learn about science, social studies, language arts, and math. Teachers arrange field trips to collect information about rivers and mountains, conduct water quality tests, and observe wildlife (Smith, 2002). In natural studies, students create a living laboratory (Smith, 2002) where they can grow vegetables and plants, and they can see the progress of the plants and learn easily. Students work in the community and help the poor and old people; they learn ethics and values. The outdoor learning activities are breaking down the boundaries of the classroom and the real world (Smith, 2002). The real-world problem-solving approach engages with the current issues of society. In a class, teachers discuss the problems of society. But in place-based learning, students get a chance to investigate and address the problems. “Students play a pivotal role in identifying problems, selecting one as a class focus, studying its characteristics and dynamics, developing potential solutions, then organizing and participating in efforts to solve the problem” (Smith, 2002, p. 589). Place-based learning is a
natural way of learning. But in the personalized classroom, the teaching methods, learning environment, and learning objectives are established according to the individuals. Some students are average achievers in a class and some students are intelligent. Sometimes average and below-average students feel they are neglected by teachers; they feel anxious and behave rudely with their teachers. In personalized classrooms, all students are given a chance to express their thoughts (Yamashiro & Noam, 2013). Teachers use innovative teaching methods, like audio-visual projection methods, and students take an interest in the material. Concentration is shown by teachers to help the students; they tutor students after the class. It is helpful to develop a good relationship between the students and teachers because it allows teachers to review students’ strengths.

Personalization has the power to improve student engagement in the classroom. Student engagement is necessary to enhance the learning in the classroom. “Engagement is not about baiting a hook. It’s about helping students find their spark and make their own fire” (Ferlazzo, 2017).

Four significant components help to develop student engagement: Autonomy, competence, relatedness, and relevance (Rayan & Deci, 2000). Autonomy is the self-determination that motivates the students to do better in the classroom. If students have strong autonomy, they will gain more motivation to achieve their goals. There are different kinds of approaches that promote autonomy in personalized learning. Teachers give a choice to the students to decide the next lesson that is taught by the teacher and gives them the freedom to select the due dates of their assignments. Teachers give them the freedom to discuss any topic in the class, and they can argue and evaluate their own views (Ferlazzo, 2017).

Competence is related to the inner power of students that motivates them to improve their performance in the classroom. Every student has the efficiency to do something
different, but there is a need to help them recognize their self-efficiency. Competence develops the ability to take decisions by themselves. They set their own targets and make strategies to achieve their goals, and these things connect them to personalized learning. “They won’t be energized by banging their heads against a wall if they have no hope of breaking through” (Ferlazzo, 2017, p. 28).

Today, there is a need to combine traditional teaching strategies with modern teaching strategies to engage the students in the classroom. “Additionally, there has been increased focus over time on the ‘how’ of teaching, with attention to questioning the efficacy of traditional lecture methods and exploring new teaching techniques to support students in more effectively learning the ‘what’ of biology” (Tanner, 2013, p. 322). There are some effective traditional teaching strategies, but teachers use different ways to engage students in classroom activities. First, teachers should give students opportunities to think and talk. Students’ participation in the classroom activities is most important to make them active. The teacher asks questions to promote verbal debate and gives students time to think about the topic, to think “biologically about increasing wait time to promote student engagement and participation” (Tanner, 2013, p. 323). After that, students write their thoughts, and it is easy for them to express and compare their ideas with other students. Then, the classroom environment promotes collaboration instead of competition. When students get new information, these things create an interest in school activities. To engage students in classroom activities, the classroom environment should be inclusive and fair. “To promote an inclusive community within the classroom, instructors can integrate opportunities for students to work in small groups during time spent within the larger class” (Tanner, 2013, p. 327). In group activities, every student gets a chance to participate.
Student-Centred Learning

Education is one of the most important parts of life. In ancient days, the main purpose of education was to give knowledge about spiritual and mundane information, and teachers were at the centre of education. However, in recent times, these aspects are only small parts of education, and technology has a significant place in education. In many debates, teachers, psychologists, and educators discuss changes in education because traditionally, there was a fixed syllabus and examinations, and students did not get a chance to represent their opinions (Marioara, 2015). Marioara also comments,

Under these conditions teachers flood their students with their own thoughts, often resorting to explanations and demonstrations of the type ‘let me show you how.’ No matter how deep and well organized it should be, the ‘casting’ facts and concepts are already ‘chewed’ and the masterful performing of procedures by the teacher interferes with learning. (p. 2343)

In modern society, education has become more flexible and student centred, and active learning is student centred (Marioara, 2015). Students build their knowledge and understanding based on acquired wisdom and information. In student-centred learning, the role of instructors has changed, as they adopt student-centred approaches, and all educational decisions are based on the needs of students. Globally, student-centred learning has been applied in schools, and every school focuses more on the holistic development of students (Marioara, 2015). The main focus of student-centred learning is on enhancing learning. Improving learning requires development in areas such as professional learning and self-regulating learning (Butler, Schnellert, & Perry, 2017), self-determination (Butler et al., 2017), and formative assessment (William & Leahy, 2015) as well as work on developing a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006).
“In the 21st century learning is defined as a constellation and competencies required to thrive in today’s rapidly evolving, information-rich societies” (Butler et al., 2017, p. 43). In learning, self-determination is closely linked to self-regulation. “When you scan for SRL [self-regulated learning] in your context, you create opportunities to notice what your students are thinking and doing in relation to the conditions you have set up in the learning environment” (Butler et al., 2017, p. 44). Self-regulating is connected to scanning students’ understanding of learning as well as their challenges and goals. Scanning is a good tool for teachers to observe students during activities, searching for evidence based on student engagement. To create a good student-centred environment, a teacher team collects evidence to make changes to improve learning. “Understanding the degree to which students feel emotionally connected to adults in their learning environment and the degree to which they fully understand the key learning goals is critically important in scanning” (Jenson, Sonnemmann, Roberts-Hull, & Hunter, 2016, p. 5). There are many areas included in scanning, such as the personal identity of students, their mental and physical wellbeing, technology, and pedagogical practice (Jenson et al., 2016, p. 5). In schools, scanning is an essential information source for teachers to determine students’ performance; when students and their teachers know their capabilities, they use their strengths to achieve goals and inform instruction.

Professional learning is related to enhancing the students’ learning and positive teaching results, and it helps teachers to improve student-centred teaching. “In Singapore, a school’s professional learning leader works with classroom teachers to ensure that their professional learning programmes are actually improving classroom teaching so that they can meet objectives set by their school principals” (Jensen et al., 2016, p. 3). Due to the advancement of technology, there is a need for teachers to change their teaching methods to
create a positive learning environment. A strategic approach is necessary for all professional learning to develop in a pattern that improves student learning.

There are three steps in professional learning for improvements. First, examine the students to determine their knowledge. Second, develop new teaching techniques to improve student learning, and third, evaluate the impacts of the methods on student learning. In student-centred learning, this structure is beneficial for the enhancement of learning. In high-performing organizations, learning communities have appeared as a keystone programme for active professional learning (Jensen et al., 2016).

**Learning without Limits**

Nowadays, one term is very important: Learning without limits. Hart, Dixon, Drummond, & McIntyre (2004) state that learning without limits means that students have no restrictions to follow the structure of organization and teachers do not make judgements on the basis of ability. The authors continue,

This is learning that is free from the needless constraints imposed by ability-focused practices, free from the indignity of being labelled top, middle or bottom, fast or slow, free from the wounding consciousness of being treated as someone who can aspire at best to only limited achievements. (p. 3)

In primary schools, a judgement of the ability of children to learn affects the children’s minds. Sometimes they feel inferior, and it affects their whole school lives. In the starting days of school, teachers cannot judge the students because they can change in further life. “Ability labels can be used simply to refer to differences in young people’s current abilities” (Hart et al., 2007, p. 7). In modern schools, the majority of people give priority to ability-based teaching and learning. Most of the schools in India have a strict curriculum and students are bound to follow the curriculum of the school. They have no freedom to do work per their own interest. Students are part of a fixed examination system, and young students’
learning is dominated by judgements of ability. When teachers plan the curriculum, there should be a contribution of students. If the curriculum is formulated to reflect the interests of students, then they will enjoy the class discussions. For student engagement in the classroom, students should have the freedom to gain new experiences through their creativity. They should have the freedom to choose their partners and challenges to complete their tasks. All these activities motivate them to achieve their goals (Hart et al., 2007). The two words *intelligence* and *ability* show the capability of students. Some students are intelligent from birth and they have the ability to do any work. Hart et al. comment,

> Ability labels are used simply to compare attainments or performance on a range of measures. Their purpose is to assist in the process of differentiation, enabling the teacher to match the range of tasks provided to the range of current abilities represented in the class. (p. 7)

Students have ability, but someone needs to polish it. It is the responsibility of teachers to polish the skills of students in primary schools. Students spend most of their time with teachers, who know the strengths and weaknesses of students. Teachers should only guide the students and give them space to choose their own place in the new world of dreams. Teachers can easily observe the grasping power of students’ knowledge and skills, and it is their responsibility to choose which type of teaching strategy they can use to teach students. Teachers can help the students to go beyond their limits in learning. Impressive teaching strategies can change the environment of the classroom, and students who are less able can improve their abilities and become intelligent students.

**Competency-Based Learning**

> “Crucial instruction does not take shortcuts. Competency is competency. When teaching our kids to ride a bike, we carefully judge their readiness and then offer sufficient instruction and practice every step of the way” (Sorenson, 2015, p.7). In the starting days of
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school, teachers give instructions to students and observe their capability and interest for any particular subject. According to students’ competency, teachers prepare students for future achievements. Sorenson observes, “Early learning success is crucial to long-term learning success, and key skills in the development of language, literacy, numeracy, motor skills and behaviour and self-regulation skills deserve the support needed to achieve competency” (Sorenson, 2015, p. 8). Behaviour and self-regulation skills are vitally important to achieve the educational goals because students’ dedication to learning new things describes their competency. Competency-based learning is an old method of learning, but it is one of the best ways to engage a student in learning. The students will find it interesting to enhance their learning and to gain new experiences. The minds of students are highly active, and the capturing power is extremely high. Whatever students learn with deep interest in primary school will remain in their minds for a long time.

Competition-based learning provides better results in collaboration than working in isolation. A higher level of competition increases the motivation, and low motivation is the result of a lower level of competition. Adding an element of competition can inspire creativity and increase productivity within teams (Baer, Leenders, Oldham, & Vadera, 2010; Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992 as cited in Desai et al., 2014). The desire to win channels the predilection for learning and sets the platform for healthy competition. When working in groups, the contribution of students increases when the desire for competition exists. Asking students to engage in a competitive battle simulates an environment in which intragroup alliances are established and utilized in order to increase the likelihood of a superior collaborative outcome (Desai et al., 2014).

Competency-based learning is related to the improvement of students, and this is a healthy practice for the enhanced performance of students. If the students have good learning skills, collaboration skills, social-emotional skills, communication skills, technical skills, and
self-regulation skills and they love to learn new skills, they can achieve every target in their lives because all these skills develop a strong competency (Sorenson, 2015, p. 23). School is the best place for children to develop good qualities in their characters. The way of teaching helps the students develop new skills; for instance, classroom group activities develop collaboration, communication, and social-emotional skills. Students express their opinions in front of their peers and learn how to help each other in group tasks. All these activities polish skills that are very helpful in their further lives.

Long-term learning success can be predicted by the end of third grade. Building a competency-based early learning initiative does not focus on job readiness skills. Instead, early childhood educators focus on the skills, concepts, and habits that allow children to become confident, skilled, motivated learners for life (Sorenson, 2015, p. 123).

There are some similarities between competency-based learning and personalized learning. The main purpose of competency-based learning is to help each student to achieve his/her goals. This is not related to just giving instructions to the students in the classroom. This method of learning gives the students learning opportunities that are helpful in developing crucial skills. In this method, teachers observe the capacities of each student; after that, they work on the strengths and weaknesses of the students. “No rational adult would throw a small hard ball at a child who is not fully able to catch it. Why then does math instruction in most schools consistently throw hardballs at kids who aren’t ready?” (Sorenson, 2015, p. 40). The teacher starts the learning process of the students according to their level of understanding. If the basic concepts are clear in math, then it is easy for students to understand the next level of math concepts. Meanwhile, in personalized learning, teachers monitor each student’s learning abilities. In the starting days of school, teachers differentiate the slow learners and active learners, and according to the learning needs of the students, they start the process of teaching. “Each child would be given as much time as needed and as
much differentiated learning practice as needed for these essential learning outcomes until competency is well established” (Sorenson, 2015, p. 41).

Personalized learning is a source to develop competency-based learning in the students. Both techniques help the teachers to do deep study on students’ capabilities. Competency-based learning prepares the students to survive in further life. The focus of this type of education places more stress on practical work rather than theoretical work. Competency-based learning is best when teachers and students have a plan in their mind, complete their steps one by one, and teachers assess the development of the learners’ skills.

Teachers use ongoing, authentic, and integrated assessments to gather information about where students are on their learning trajectories in order to guide curriculum and instruction. Because students must “show what they know,” learning becomes the metric for student evaluation, not seat-time or birth date (Vander Ark, 2013).

In competency-based learning, teachers first assess the students because it is important to know that students are able to go into the next grade. After that, teachers will start the next level of learning because first they need to understand the students’ capabilities. Teachers have a responsibility to create a friendly learning environment, helping the kids to know about their interests and developing morals and personality. Teachers should use teaching strategies according to the needs of students because students have different problems such as behaviour, absenteeism, and different learning skills and interests (Sorenson, 2015, p. 41). Teachers should recognize the various learning needs of students because “instead of keeping all students on the same page at the same time, students work at their level of readiness, instead of assuming all students learn in the same way” (Sorenson, 2015, p. 53).
Blended Learning (BL)

Education systems are undergoing change in the new era. Technology plays an important role in introducing the new teaching methods and new ways of learning. Technology changes the definition of education so that now students get educated in and out of the classroom (Dunn, 2011). “For example, computers are no longer novelties; they are only as common as blackboards, they are much more portable” (Dunn, 2011, p. 3). Blended learning is a good teaching strategy. “Broadly defined, blended learning is multimodal—it blends different methods of instruction to improve student learning. By harnessing the power of technology, blended learning empowers teachers with new multimodal strategies and allows teachers to personalize learning more efficiently” (Vander Ark, 2013, p. 4). This is a combination of traditional teaching methods and technology. Teachers use different types of technical sources to improve learning and make it more personalized. “BL is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: Traditional face-to-face learning systems and distributed learning systems. It also emphasizes the central role of computer-based technologies in blended learning” (Bonk & Graham, 2005, p. 66).

Blended learning is a transformation of the classroom environment with the help of technology to boost the efficiency of teachers and students. On the other side, “blended learning may include but is not limited to technology-enhanced traditional practices such as presenting on an interactive whiteboard, sharing digital content, or asking students to conduct online research” (Vander Ark, 2013, p. 4). There are four elements in blended learning: Control over time, place, path, and/or pace (Vander Ark, 2013). Blended learning revolves around the individual students; it changes the school system, and it changes the responsibilities of teachers. Teachers can divide an overcrowded class into small groups and make the classroom practice impressive.
The Blended Learning Implementation Guide points out that the shift is not just another district initiative, but rather a large-scale opportunity to develop schools that are more productive for teachers and students by personalizing education to ensure that the right resources and interventions reach the right students at the right time (Vander Ark, 2013).

The implementation of a blended-learning teaching strategy means a combination of old and modern teaching strategies. Teachers can teach two teaching methods at the same time. This changes the educational goals and way of teaching and learning and creates a personalized learning environment. There are various forms of blended learning that fit their academic goals and physical situations. Blended learning incorporates station rotation, lab rotation, flipped classroom, or individual rotation forms (Christensen, Horn, & Staker, 2011). Station rotation is commonly applied in primary schools because this technique changes the traditional classrooms into activity centres (Evans, 2012). In this type of learning, the classroom is like a station and the teacher rotates small groups of students. They need one digital device to complete this process. A lab rotation is also used in primary schools; students usually visit the computer to learn about computer and digital technology. “Johnson et al., 2010 note that the use of digital technology as a key component of blended learning allows for sufficient, independent practice that may not be possible within a traditional classroom setting without technological support” (Prescott, Bundschuh, Kazakoff, & Macaruso, 2017, p.2). Blended learning is important to enhance students’ learning and prepare them for higher education. In public schools, blended learning will be helpful to connect the students with the global world; they can learn the modern educational techniques. This will be helpful for the overall development of the students.

It is clear from the literature review that modern teaching strategies give support to the education system. Teaching strategies are most important to build a positive and active atmosphere in the class. If the way of teaching will not be appropriate, students will not grab
knowledge. Teaching is an art, and teaching techniques help the teachers to make it impressive. Innovative ways of teaching attract the students to participate in class activities. They get knowledge in a play way method and do not feel stressed. The combination of traditional and modern teaching methods can be implemented in schools. It will be helpful for the overall development of the students because private schools already use the advanced techniques of teaching. So, these techniques will be helpful to improve the education of rural Indian public schools. This will provide teachers a chance to know new teaching skills and increase their professional skills (Yamashiro & Noam, 2013).
Chapter 3: Procedures and Methods

This chapter outlines the purpose behind the lesson plan handbook for Indian primary school teachers of different subjects that I have created based on my research and experience. I have prepared Chapter Four based on the curriculum of the British Columbia Ministry of Education. This handbook will provide different subjects’ lesson plans for grades one to five, which will be helpful to implement in the Indian rural primary schools.

Some Aspects of Course Planning

Posner and Rudintsky (1994) stated that course design is a complex phenomenon. Several aspects have to be considered while planning a course, such as audience, current approaches to the subject matter, as well as the willingness and commitment of the planner. Moreover, these authors argue that there is a need to mould the course design as per the needs of the audience, even if the subject matter is not changed. Accordingly, the lesson plan handbook for primary school teachers has been prepared for an audience of teachers in the rural Indian primary schools. Furthermore, it is based on the modern teaching strategies being used in British Columbia schools, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Rationale for Grades One to Five Lesson Plan Handbook

Posner and Rudintsky (1994) noted that a course outline “serves the purpose of justifying the learning that students are to acquire during the course as well as justifying the methods and procedures employed in teaching the course” (p. 52). The course rationale should explain the intension of the planner for the learner, society, and subject matter. The course rationale describes all aspects of the course, such as: “What are the problems?” and “Why do these problems need to be solved?”

The purpose of education is to bring out the potential in all learners. Teaching is also a lifelong learning process. My research is related to the strategies that primary school teachers in Indian rural areas can use to engage the students. Teaching strategies are the foundation of
enhancing the student learning in the classroom. I have spent most of my life in the rural areas in India. I can understand the problems and situations that they are facing in the present era. Education is the most important part of the development of any state. I know that with the help of education, students can make their lives better because they will have an awareness of all their rights and the ability to obtain good jobs. The children’s future will be bright. My schooling and life experience have given me strength to choose teaching strategies as a thesis topic. This topic looks simplistic at first sight, but it is the foundation of the current educational structure. Private schools are run by business organizations and the private school education is costly. In the rural areas, most of the families’ financial level is not high. So, all these problems are barriers to students seeing a bright future. When I was a student, I also faced all these types of problems. I believe that this is an opportunity for me to do something good for the rural Indian primary schools’ teachers and students. Most of the Indian primary public schools use traditional ways of teaching, which place emphasis on passive learning. Rote learning and theoretical curriculum do not develop extensive logical thinking, and there is a need to implement new teaching strategies.

As a literature review, I have described the different types of modern teaching strategies that are used in British Columbia (BC) schools. But all these teaching strategies describe the purpose of redesigned curriculum. I chose BC’s redesigned curriculum as the basis of my research. BC’s redesigned curriculum describes the basic competencies that we need to inculcate in all students for their overall development.

Core Competencies

“Core competencies are the sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop in order to engage in deeper learning” (Ministry of Ed., 2018). As a teacher, my focus is to develop all these core competencies in students, and new teaching strategies will help me to develop thinking, communication, and
social personal competencies. The thinking competency describes the knowledge and skills that are related to intellectual development. “It is through their competency as thinkers that students take subject-specific concepts and content and transform them into a new understanding” (2018). Thinking competency is related to creative and critical thinking. “Creative thinking involves the generation of new ideas and concepts that have value to the individual or others, and the development of these ideas and concepts from the thought of reality” (BC New Curriculum, 2018). Creative thinking helps students to generate and develop new ideas. “Critical thinking involves making judgements based on reasoning: students consider options, analyse these using specific criteria, and draw conclusions and make judgements” (2018). Critical thinking helps the students develop the strength of analysing and critiquing every situation in class and in daily life.

Teaching strategies help the students develop creative and critical thinking. In personalized learning and student-centred learning, students get a space to develop their thinking. Students should have a capability to think beyond their limitations. The artful teachers’ approach (Crawford et al., 2005, p. 10) helps the students think about a particular topic, get knowledge, ask questions, and create new ideas in their minds. On the other hand, traditional teaching ways put more emphasis on rote learning without any logic. If the students have critical thinking, they can observe any situation/problem in a logical way and can get the solution of the problem easily.

The frameworks for learning in the 21st century relate to lifelong learning and self-direction because every moment of life gives us a lesson, and school education gives students direction for their lives. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are essential to instil in students so they can differentiate right from wrong and easily solve their learning problems, too. There should be healthy communication in student-centred classrooms because communication is important to learn activities in a class. Without creativity, innovation, and
new technology, education cannot be possible because all these things are the main themes of today’s education. In all learning classrooms, some students struggle due to special needs and disabilities; therefore, self-determination empowers them to face those challenges to improve their learning. Self-determination is an arrangement of skills, knowledge, and opinions that assist a person in goal-directed, self-regulated, self-ruling behaviour to make decisions, solve problems, and polish skills to find success. In student-centred learning, it’s important for students to make decisions related to their studies and solve problems using their knowledge of skills and strategies for self-observation and self-evaluation. This is important for both teachers and students. Teachers should teach skills for taking risks and making safe choices so that students can become more independent.

Communication competency is also related to curriculum, and classroom activities are part of communication. “Communication competency encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences, and ideas, to explore the world around them, and to understand and effectively engage in the use of digital media” (Ministry of Ed., 2018). There is a need to develop listening and speaking skills. Some students have a hesitation to speak in front of the class. They cannot express their feelings and problems. Communication competency helps the students in their learning and builds the relationship to society. In the lecture method, teachers speak in front of the class; they do not have concern about students’ understanding. Teaching strategies help the students connect with their peers and teachers. If the students have good communication skills, they can engage easily in classroom activities like group discussion, decision making, and debating on a particular topic. To make learning interesting, teachers should encourage students to participate actively in the classroom activities. Hand-raising activities give a chance for students to express their ideas and motivate other students to participate in the activity. Teachers should give a chance for most of the students to raise their voices. Every student has a different way to express his
or her ideas. Sometimes students have a problem understanding the difficult language of books; when their peers explain the ideas in simple language, they can easily understand them. Teachers should monitor the students’ participation; sometimes three or four students raise their hands in the classroom and other students participate passively. It is a teacher’s responsibility to give a chance to every student to express his or her views. It is the best way to improve communication skills.

The third competency is personal and social. This is related to students’ personal and social awareness and responsibility toward society and tries to enhance personal qualities. Personal awareness and responsibility help the students play an active role to set goals, monitor progress, regulate emotions, respect their own rights and the rights of others, and try to understand the difficult situations of life. Schools help the students become active, responsible members of society (Ministry of Ed., 2018). In my literature review, I describe place-based learning. Place-based learning inspires the students to connect with society. In place-based learning, teachers teach the students about society and the problems that are faced by people. When students connect with the real situations of life, they learn more instead of in the classroom (Skoutajan, 2012). In place-based learning, the purpose of education is the social and personal development of students. I have chosen the core competencies of the redesigned BC curriculum because these provide a direction to choose effective teaching strategies. The purpose of education should not only be preparing students for jobs. It should be to develop competencies and personal qualities that will help the students become good citizens and human beings.

**Curriculum Model**

There are three elements of the BC curriculum model: Content, curricular competencies, and big ideas. These three elements work together and put more emphasis on deeper learning. In BC schools, all learning is based on the “Know-Do-Understand” model.
The vision of BC’s curriculum design is to focus more on personalized, flexible, and innovative approaches at all levels of the education system. This model will help me to design my lesson plans for the primary school students in rural India. This is a redesigned curriculum model of BC that I will use as a guide.

**Content (know)** The content learning standards describe the syllabus of each grade level. It includes essential topics that are important to teach the students.

**Curricular competencies (do).** All skills, strategies, and processes that students develop over their learning time are curricular competencies. Curricular competencies have more emphasis on content and inculcate core competencies in students.

**Big ideas (understand).** The big ideas are more focused on principals and key concepts that are important in the field of learning. This is related to the assessment of the students’ performance and understanding of the curriculum for each grade.

**Importance of Contents in My Context**

All the contents that I describe in the literature review and Chapter Three are connected to each other. In the literature review, I describe the innovative teaching strategies such as personalized learning, student-centred learning, learning without limits, competency-based learning, and blended learning. In Chapter Three, I noted the core competencies and model of curriculum of BC’s redesigned curriculum. Every aspect has a different importance. Core competencies are related to intellectual, personal, and emotional development to engage students in classroom learning. The BC model of curriculum is very helpful for teachers to create flexible learning and competency-based learning. The three elements of the curriculum model address personalized learning. After going through the literature review of innovative teaching strategies, I have come up with the idea of creating a grade one to five lesson plan handbook for rural Indian primary school teachers. I have decided to prepare a handbook of
lesson plans because I know the present situation of rural Indian primary schools is in need of improvement.

**Creating a Grade One to Grade Five Lesson Plan Handbook**

The ultimate goal of creating a grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook is to improve the education level of rural Indian primary schools. The grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook will prove to be a great advantage to the students and teachers. I will prepare the lesson plans of different subjects for grades one to five. I will follow the curriculum and teaching strategies of the BC redesigned curriculum. The content of teaching will be a combination of Indian and British primary school syllabus. This handbook will be helpful for teachers to learn about new teaching strategies. It will be helpful for teachers so that they can create an innovative and creative learning environment.
Chapter 4: The Design

This chapter will represent the lesson plan handbook that I have created on the basis of my research and experience in the field of teaching in India. This grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook will suggest new teaching strategies and prepare new lesson plans on the basis of different teaching strategies. This lesson plan handbook will give directions to teachers about the use of new teaching strategies. I have designed the lesson plan for primary school teachers to support them in their teaching and help them enhance their skills.

I offer this handbook to support all the teachers to implement new teaching strategies and give them a new vision to improve the rural Indian primary education system as well as help the students reach their personal potential by developing their social, emotional, and mental skills. Students have different mental abilities to acquire knowledge. Some students learn everything when the teacher teaches in the class and some of them take time to learn the same thing. So, I have prepared the lesson plans for grades one to five, which will be implemented in those classrooms where students of different intellectual levels are learning.

The redesigned curriculum of BC is the basis of every lesson plan. It will help me to create the learning intentions for every lesson. As discussed in the literature review, a student is at the centre in all the teaching strategies. The primary school curriculum should be according to the students’ capabilities, and when I started to outline the lesson plans, students were the most important aspect of my research. These teaching strategies will help the teachers organize the classroom environment. I will organize group activities, individual activities, and innovative and creative classroom activities that will be helpful to engage the students. It will create a competitive environment between students, and they will have the curiosity to learn more. This grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook will be helpful for teachers to prepare lesson plans for different subjects. Teachers can pre-plan their lessons, which they will teach in the next class. Teachers can pick one teaching strategy and adapt another lesson
plan, and this will be helpful to save and manage time. Through this design research, it is my hope that I will create meaningful and useful lesson plans that will provide helpful guidance to rural Indian primary school teachers.
A. Model Lesson Plan for Teaching Math

Teaching Strategy: Personalized Learning

Rationale: Personalized learning means every student’s learning experience is different. It describes the individual needs, skills, and interests of students. Teachers should know about students: What they learn, how, when, and where they learn it (Childress & Benson, 2014). In personalized learning, to engage students, most of the teachers talk with individual students during free time. Teachers know about the problems of students in a particular subject and help them achieve their targets. This is the best way to enhance the student-teacher relationship. Mathematics is a difficult subject for some students. In personalized learning, teachers can solve the problems of students.

Time Duration: 40 minutes each lesson

Grade: One

Topic: Addition and Subtraction

Essential Question:

How can we create personalized learning in a mathematics class?

Learning Intentions:

- To enable the students to develop mental math strategies and abilities to make sense of quantities.
- To enable the students to use technology to explore mathematics.
- To enable the students to develop, demonstrate, and apply mathematical understanding through play, inquiry, and problem solving.
- To explain and justify mathematical ideas and decisions (BC Min. of Ed., 2018).

Material: 25 pencils, 25 paper charts, 1 packet of sticky notes, 25 baggies of cereal or small stones for each child.
**Previous Knowledge Test:** Teacher will write on white board some simple addition and subtraction sums to check their previous knowledge. Teacher will give them sticky notes and tell them to write down their answers. If a large number of students will successfully answer the sums, then teacher will start the next lesson.

**Announcement of the Topic:** The teacher will say, “Well students! Today, we shall learn more about addition and subtraction.”

**Activities: Part One**
Teacher will write 5+5-5 on white board. Teacher will ask the students about the meaning of the term written on white board. After that, the teacher will give instructions to 10 students to stand in two groups of five and ask them to count all the pencils they have. The total will be ten. Students will try to solve the problem, and they will add 5+5 and will write 10. Ten students will stand on one side and five of ten students from the group are taken out. Five out of ten will be subtracted. Remaining five students will be the answer for 10-5=5.

**Part Two**
Teacher will give each student the bag of stones and a piece of paper and give them freedom to make any structure and count the stones.

- Teacher will tell them 4 stones together with 1 stone is 5. Write 1+4=5 and ask the students to write it down, too.
- Eight pieces of stone together with 5 pieces is 13. Write 8+5=13 and ask the students to write it down.
- Rajiv has 24 story books. He buys 2 more. How many books does he have now? Ask the students to write it down.

When the students learn how to add, it will make it easy for them to learn the concept of subtraction a bit more easily.
• Teacher will tell them, 5 pieces of stones, take away 1 piece, 4 pieces left over. Write 5-1= 4 and ask the students to write it down.

• 8 pieces of stones and take away 5 pieces of stones is 3 left over. Write 8-5=3 and ask the students to write it.

• Rajiv has 24 story books and he gives 2 books to his sister. How many he has left? Ask the students to write it down.

After that, teacher will give time to the students to study in groups, and students will have time to think about the problems.

**Observation:** Teacher will check the notebooks of the students and check the students’ performance. In every class, some students are slow learners, and teacher will spend more time for those students who are struggling. Teacher will tell them different ways to learn about addition and subtraction.

**Homework:** Teacher will tell the students to go home and describe to their family what putting together and taking away means. It gives students more time to practise.
B. Lesson Plan For Teaching Social Studies

Teaching Strategy: Competency-based learning

Rationale: “In the context of education, the term refers to the ability of students to perform a task as expected within a specific discipline or area of learning. That ability represents a combination of skills, processes, behaviours, and habits of mind” (BC Min. of Ed.). In classroom activities, teachers can easily recognize the capabilities of the students, and teachers can help the students enhance their skills.

Time Duration: 40 minutes each lecture

Grade: Two

Topic: Good Citizen

Learning Intentions:

- To enable the students to understand their rights and duties.
- To enable the students to understand the responsibilities of a good citizen.
- To enable the students to develop a social awareness to live in society.
- To enable the students to understand the importance of protecting human rights in a democracy.

Previous Knowledge Test:

1. What are the rights of Indian citizens?

   Expected Answer: Rights are individual opportunities for all citizens to live their lives without any restrictions.

2. How many human rights in the Indian constitution?

   Expected Answer: Right of equality, right of freedom, right against exploitation, right to freedom of religion, cultural and educational rights.

3. What is the meaning of good citizen?
Expected Answer: Good citizen is a person who respects others and he/she fulfils his/her social and moral responsibilities.

Announcement of the Topic:

The teacher will say, “Well students! Today, we shall learn more about responsibilities of a good citizen.”

Material: Text book: Social- studies: Grade Two

Activities:

Teacher will divide the students into two or three groups and ask them to think about the scenario, how a good citizen would respond and how a bad citizen responds to any particular situation. Example: You are in the bus and someone drops a wallet. What do you do?

Two or three groups of students will play a short skit in the class about the good and bad citizens. After all the students presented in the classroom, teacher tell the students to write down main points on white board what makes a citizen good or bad?

For the struggling students, teacher will help them to think about the ideas of the skits.

Homework:

Teacher will write down three questions and tell the students to find the answers from their textbooks and note down in their notebooks at home.

Questions:

1. Why are good citizens important in society?

2. What they can do become good citizens?

3. What can they do as good citizens for society?
C. Model Lesson Plan for Teaching a Story (English)

**Teaching Strategy:** Student-centred learning

**Rationale:** Student-centred learning is learner centred or child centred. The purpose of student-centred learning is that “the student is more active, not just in doing learning activities, such as speaking, calculating, experimenting and writing and creative videos and web-based materials but also in thinking about and in shaping their own learning” (Jacobs et al., 2016, p. 95). Student-centred learning revolves around teachers as co-learners, students as teachers, life-long learning, co-operative learning, collaborative learning, and peer interaction. Student-centred learning is not just a teaching strategy. It is a mindset for looking at education.

**Time Duration:** 40 minutes each lecture

**Grade:** Three

**Topic:** The Hare and the Tortoise (story)

**Learning Intentions:**

- To enable the students to get the knowledge about the story.
- To enable the students to read fluently at grade level.
- To enable the students to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- To enable the students to recognize the structure and elements of story.
- To enable the students to apply the art of writing a composition in their daily life situations.

**Previous Knowledge Testing:**

The teacher will ask the following questions in order to test the previous knowledge of the students:

1. Tell me the name of some animals.

Expected Answer: Dog, deer, fox and lion, etc. are the names of some animals.
2. Name of two animals that live on land as well as in water.

Expected Answer: Frog and tortoise live on land as well as in water.

(Teacher now shows students a picture of hare).

3. Identify the picture of this animal.

Expected Answer: This is a hare.

4. Who runs faster, the hare or the tortoise?

Expected Answer: The hare runs faster.

**Announcement of the Topic:** The teacher will say, “Well students! Today, we shall develop a story, ‘The Hare and the Tortoise.’”

**Material:** Text book – English Reader, Part One.

**Activities:** With the whole class on the carpet in a circle, two students will play the role of the hare and the tortoise. Teacher will narrate the story and try to create an image of what the real forest looks like in the minds of students. It will help to create the curiosity and interest of students in class. Teacher will ask the questions about the details of the story after the completion of the first half of the story.

**Questions:**

1. Where did the hare and tortoise live?

2. Who always made fun of the tortoise?

3. Why did the tortoise challenge the hare?
After completion of the story, teacher will give them time to discuss the moral of the story. Teacher will divide students in a group and they will discuss the story and explain what they learn and the moral of the story.

Activity Part Two:

In the second half of the lesson, the teacher will tell them real-life stories of famous personalities of the world and about their success, and these stories have a similar moral to the story that they are learning. Teacher will discuss the importance of the stories in real life. What lessons can be learned from these stories? Students will give answers to the teacher.

Homework:

Students will find other moral stories from school library, textbook, and their grandparents, and will represent them in class next day. Students can make charts and drawings.
D. Model Lesson Plan for Teaching Environmental Education

**Teaching Strategy:** Place-based learning

**Rationale:** Smith (2002) comments that one of the main strengths of place-based education “is that it can adapt to the unique characteristics of particular places, and in this way it can help overcome the disjuncture between school and children’s lives that is found in too many classrooms” (p. 584). These days, many children have no interest in nature, and they have no interest in preserving it. As a teacher, it is very important to prepare the students for the future so that they have knowledge about nature and natural resources. Place-based learning helps the students go outside the classroom and explore nature and get information.

**Time Duration:** 40 minutes for each lesson

**Grade:** Four

**Topic:** Plants-Our Green Friends

**Learning Intentions:**

- To establish curiosity about the natural world.
- To enable the students to make predications based on previous knowledge.
- To suggest the different ways to make a plan and conduct an inquiry to find answers to their questions.
- To enable the students to consider the ethical responsibilities before starting any research.
- To know about people’s perspectives before starting any research.
- To enable the students to participate in social welfare through individual and collaborative methods.

**Essential Question:**

How is the place-based teaching strategy helpful to make learning interesting?

**Material:**

Textbook: *Environmental Studies*, six sheets of chart paper, six markers.
Activities:
Field trip of botanical garden, short documentary movie: *Importance of Plants to Humans and Animals in Everyday’s [sic] Life* (makemegenius, 2014); classroom activities like classroom garden from trash.

Activity:

**Part One:** Class teacher will arrange a field trip for students. It will be to a botanical garden so that students can get knowledge about different types of plants and teacher can explain about plants in an easy way. Teacher tells the students to collect pictures of different plants from the bookshop and make a chart to represent them in the classroom. Students can make the charts to describe the importance of plants or explain the different types of plants.

**Part Two:** The next day, students will create a classroom garden from trash. They will collect different types of plants from a school garden that are normally thrown away with the help of class teacher. This activity will help students enhance their creativity and memorize the names of different plants.

**Part Three:** To make the teaching interesting, teacher will show the documentary movie related to preserving the environment and the importance of plants in our daily life (makemegenius, 2014).

**Assessment:** At the end of every period, teacher will ask questions to the students for students’ engagement in the classroom.
E. Model Lesson Plan for Teaching Sports and Fitness

Teaching Strategy: Blended Learning

Rational: Blended learning is a combination of traditional face-to-face interaction and modern online or internet usage in the field of education. In the modern teaching methods, teachers use both methods in one classroom. Blended learning is very helpful to connect the students with the whole world. Teacher uses different types of technical sources to create an innovative and interesting classroom environment (Bonk, C. J., & Graham, C. R., 2005). Physical education and sports is a practical subject. To complete the theory work, we can use the blended learning approach, and it helps to make learning more interesting.

Time Duration: 40 minutes each lecture

Grade: Five

Topic: Sports and Fitness

Essential Question:

How can we create blended learning in physical education and sports?

Learning Intentions:

- To enable the students to understand the importance of fitness in their daily lives.
- To describe the different types of physical activities in the classroom.
- To enable the students to understand the main ideas and supporting details in a radio and TV report.
- To enable the students to engage in sports activities and help improve students’ focus in sports activities.

Previous Knowledge Testing:

For testing the previous knowledge of students, the class teacher will ask the following questions:

1. What do you do to keep fit?
Expected Answer: Participate in games and physical exercise.

2. Which sports do you like?
   Students have a different choice like cricket, hockey, football, boxing, and so on.

3. Would you like to meet any sports personality in your real life?
   Expected Answer: Students have excitement and give different answers according to their choice. Some students like to meet cricketers and others hockey players.

**Announcement of the Topic:**

Teacher will write students’ answers on the white board and say “Well students!
Today, we shall read about sports and fitness and we will also watch an interview of a sports personality and know about his/her life.”

**Study Material:** Textbook: *Physical Education and Sports*, white board, marker, and computers.

**Activities:**

**Pre-Computer Session:**

In the first session of the lecture, teacher will explain the importance of sports and fitness in a person’s life and sports always keep us fit and healthy. After that, teacher will ask the importance of games to students and write down the answers on the white board so that students can note down the main points in their notebooks.

**Computer Session:**

In the second session, teacher will give a chance to students to watch the interview of famous cricket player Sachin Tendulkar, and they will get a chance to know about the struggles behind his success.

Teacher gives a chance to students to access the computer. While students are working, teacher will go around the class and see if they are facing any problems. Students may have
some listening difficulties to understand some words; teacher will explain the words and give the students a second chance to understand the interview.

**Post-Computer Session:**

In the third session, teacher will tell the students to think about a famous sports personality whom they would like to interview and write down a list of questions that they want to ask. Students will share their questions in class. Teacher will divide the class into pairs and tell them to play an interview between a journalist and a famous sports person. Students can find appropriate answers to the questions on the internet. When the activity is complete, teacher will ask the students about their experience and discuss the answers to the questions in the whole class.

**Homework:**

Students will make a chart of their favourite game. Teacher suggests they draw a layout of their favourite game on chart paper.
**Chapter 5: Conclusion**

**Summary**

The purpose of this research study was to explore innovative teaching strategies and prepare a grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook for rural Indian primary school teachers so that they can have a clear picture of new innovative teaching strategies and they can easily implement the innovative teaching strategies in the rural Indian primary schools.

As discussed in the earlier chapters, most of the rural Indian primary school teachers use traditional teaching strategies to teach the students. I have experienced the effects of traditional teaching strategies as a student and a teacher. In these days, rural Indian primary school teachers also face these types of problems. My journey started when I writing a research paper on modern teaching strategies. I did not have any idea that there were different types of teaching strategies instead of the lecture method. Teachers can use new teaching methods to engage students in the classroom. So, after having read several articles and books on innovative teaching strategies, to which I refer in the literature review in Chapter Two, I now have an idea that innovative teaching strategies play an important role in engaging the students in classroom activities, and these teaching strategies give a direction to the teachers to teach in an interesting way and manage the classroom.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Through this research study, I developed an understanding of the importance of teaching strategies in creating a student’s interest in the classroom. These modern teaching strategies have been described in the literature review. The BC redesigned curriculum was studied and became the basis of a lesson-plan handbook. This awareness and learning developed the idea to prepare a lesson-plan handbook on innovative teaching strategies for rural Indian primary school teachers. These innovative teaching strategies provide direction
to Indian teachers in rural schools to change the focus from traditional teaching methods to modern teaching methods.

Most of the schools in BC apply innovative teaching strategies to teach students. The redesigned curriculum of BC is based on personalized learning and competency-based learning. “The redesign of BC’s curriculum provides flexibility to inspire the personalization of learning and address the diverse needs and interests of BC students” (BC Redesigned Curriculum, 2018). The core competencies of the BC curriculum helped to create a grade one to grade five lesson plan hand-book in Chapter Four, and these were implemented with the different innovative teaching strategies to plan the lessons. As a result, it can be seen that the innovative teaching strategies of BC can be applied in rural Indian primary schools.

As discussed in the earlier chapters, the level of education is not very high in the rural Indian primary schools. Most of the parents are illiterate and belong to poor families. So, it is very important to educate the rural students. But primary education is a main human right; it plays an important role both in the development of individuals and society (Kaushik et al., 2009).

Most of the students in rural India do not like to come to school and get an education. Teaching strategies play an important role in engaging the students in classroom activities. Teaching is an art to attract the students to sit in a classroom and create an interest in the different subjects. Innovative teaching strategies have different objectives for the whole class and for individual students. Teachers can mould their teaching techniques according to students’ interests and mental abilities to get an education in a classroom. Through this research process, different innovative teaching strategies were studied. Every teaching strategy has a different approach to engage the students in the classroom. After learning of these different strategies, the challenge was determining how to implement these teaching strategies in rural Indian primary schools and how to help the teachers implement these
methods in a classroom. The lesson plan handbook became the design of this research. In the lesson plan handbook, five lesson plans on five different subjects we created to be taught in the rural Indian primary schools, and five different innovative teaching strategies were chosen. These lesson plans will be helpful to give a direction to the teachers regarding how they can implement different teaching strategies in a classroom. When teachers prepare the lesson plan, it is very important that all the activities should be educative and interesting. In this research process, I learned that when we make a lesson plan for students, first we should have a base plan that states the motive of the teaching strategy to teach the students and addresses how it will be helpful for the development of the students. The redesigned curriculum of BC was studied; it describes the core competencies, a set of mental, personal, social, and personal abilities that all students need to develop in order to engage in learning (Min. of Ed., 2018). The motive of education is to develop creative and critical thinking so that children can take decisions in their further lives. Development of social and emotional abilities and effective communication helps the students to express their feelings toward the teachers and society.

With the help of the lesson plan handbook, teachers will get an idea of how they can prepare their lesson plans for different classes. Five innovative teaching strategies will change the way of teaching, and they can choose the different teaching strategies according to each subject’s demand. These lesson plans will change the way of thinking of teachers; they can make theoretical subjects interesting with the help of different teaching methods.

**Limitations:**

The level of education is also very poor in the secondary and higher secondary schools in rural India. Students face the same situation; they have no interest in the studies and they do not want to continue their studies. As a result, I made a lesson plan handbook according to the primary school students. All the activities are related to the age of the
primary school students. Secondary school teachers cannot implement these lesson plans as they are. They will need modifications in the classroom activities according to the students’ mental abilities.

In this research design, I have used qualitative methods of data collection such as observation and self-reports based on my personal experience. In fact, the grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook is based on the qualitative data method. Moreover, the research is based on my personal experience as a student and teacher in the rural Indian schools. In the present scenario, the situation could be different in some of the rural Indian primary schools.

**Future Research and Recommendations**

The grade one to grade five lesson plan handbook is a part of research, and it is a first step toward engaging the rural Indian primary school students with the help of new teaching strategies. Further research must be conducted in the rural Indian primary schools where these teaching strategies will be implemented. More research could investigate specific classes and schools as case studies. How will the teachers design the lesson plans for students, and how will they implement them in the classroom? In other words, further research could look into which kind of innovative teaching strategies are more effective to engage the students in the classroom activities and how these new teaching strategies improving the schools’ overall performance. I will bear in mind Dweck’s (2015) comment, “Of course, learning shouldn’t really be a race. But this race helped my friend discover his brain and connect it up with his schooling.” This kind of research is necessary to implement innovative teaching strategies in all the rural Indian primary schools. This research will take time, but the results will be fruitful.
References


