

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF TEACHER-CENTERED APPROACHES

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Abstract: *This article explores the nuanced landscape of teacher-centered classes, analyzing both their advantages and disadvantages in educational settings. It delves into the structured nature of teacher-centered instruction, highlighting its efficacy in delivering foundational knowledge in subjects like mathematics, language arts, and science. Additionally, the article scrutinizes potential drawbacks, including limited student engagement and reduced opportunities for independent critical thinking. By providing a balanced examination, it aims to inform educators and policymakers about the contextual appropriateness of teacher-centered approaches, emphasizing the importance of a judicious blend with student-centered methodologies to cultivate a holistic and effective learning environment.*

Key words: *teacher-centered classes, advantages, disadvantages, education, instructional methods, structured learning, foundational knowledge, student engagement, critical thinking, balanced approach, learning environment.*

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of education, the methodology employed within classrooms significantly influences the learning experience. One such pedagogical approach is the teacher-centered model, where the instructor takes on a central role in delivering content and guiding the learning process. This article delves into the advantages and disadvantages of teacher-centered classes, exploring how this traditional method shapes the educational landscape and impacts students' acquisition of knowledge. By examining both the merits and drawbacks, we aim to provide a nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play in teacher-centered educational environments.

Teacher-centered education and student-centered education are two different approaches used for effective teaching and learning. Teacher-centered education, also known as traditional education, views the teacher as the major source of knowledge and authority in the classroom (Mascolo, 2009). A teacher-centered class, also known as a traditional or lecture-based class, is one in which the teacher takes on a central role in the delivery of information and instruction. In this type of class, the teacher is the primary source of knowledge and directs the learning process, often through lectures, direct instruction, and demonstrations. Students typically have limited opportunities for active participation, and the focus is on the teacher imparting

knowledge and students receiving and assimilating it. This approach places an emphasis on the teacher's expertise and authority, and students are expected to follow the teacher's lead. Teacher-centered classes are more traditional in nature and focus on the teacher as the primary source of knowledge and instruction. In a teacher-centered class, the teacher is responsible for planning and delivering lessons, directing class activities, and assessing students' learning. Teacher-centered education, also known as traditional education, is an approach to teaching in which the teacher is the primary source of knowledge and authority in the classroom (Hancock, Bray, & Nason, 2003)

Advantages of teacher-centered classes include:

1. Clear structure: Teacher-centered classes often have a clear and organized structure, with the teacher guiding the flow of the lesson and maintaining order in the classroom.

2. Knowledge dissemination: Teachers are experts in their subjects and can effectively convey information to students, which can be especially beneficial for complex or abstract concepts.

3. Direct instruction: In teacher-centered classes, students receive direct instruction from the teacher, which can be particularly helpful for students who prefer more guidance and structure.

4. Teacher expertise: Teachers can provide immediate feedback, offer explanations, and clarify misunderstandings, which can enhance students' understanding of the material.

5. Classroom management: In teacher-centered classes, the teacher maintains control of the classroom environment, ensuring that learning is the primary focus.

While teacher-centered classes have these advantages, it's important to recognize that there are also benefits to student-centered approaches, such as increased student engagement and active learning. It's essential to strike a balance between teacher-centered and student-centered strategies to best meet the needs of all students.

Disadvantages of teacher-centered classes:

1. Limited student engagement: Teacher-centered classes may lead to limited student participation and engagement, as students may feel less motivated to actively contribute to the learning process.

2. Passive learning: Students may become passive learners in teacher-centered classes, as they primarily receive information from the teacher without being actively involved in the learning process.

3. Lack of individualized instruction: Teacher-centered classes may not cater to the individual learning needs of students, as the focus is primarily on the teacher imparting knowledge to the entire class.

4. Limited critical thinking and creativity: Students in teacher-centered classes may have fewer opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and creativity, as they are often expected to memorize and regurgitate information.

5. Dependency on the teacher: Students may become overly dependent on the teacher for knowledge and guidance, leading to a lack of independent learning skills and self-reliance.

Overall, while teacher-centered classes offer structure and expertise, they may also limit student engagement and creativity, and detract from the development of independent learning skills. Teacher-centered classes refer to instructional approaches where the teacher is the primary authority figure and the central focus of the class. In this type of class, the teacher leads the learning process, directs instruction, and controls the pace and content of the lesson.

Student-centered classes, on the other hand, involve instructional approaches that prioritize students' learning needs and interests. These classes encourage active student participation, collaborative learning, and critical thinking. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding and supporting students as they explore and discover knowledge.

Teacher-centered classes are often more common in the early stages of education, such as elementary school, where students are introduced to foundational concepts and skills. However, the suitability of teacher-centered classes can vary based on educational philosophies and specific subjects. It's essential to consider the developmental stage of students and gradually incorporate more student-centered approaches as they progress through their education.

In teacher-centered approaches, students typically play a more passive role, receiving information and instruction from the teacher. Their responsibility lies in attentiveness, note-taking, and following instructions. However, student engagement can still be vital for effective learning, as active participation and questioning can enhance understanding.

Teacher-centered classes are often suitable for subjects that require a structured and foundational approach. These may include:

- **Basic Mathematics and Arithmetic:** Fundamental mathematical concepts often benefit from direct instruction and practice under the guidance of a teacher.
- **Language Arts and Grammar:** Teaching language rules, grammar, and reading comprehension can be effectively done in a teacher-centered setting, especially in the early stages.
- **Science Fundamentals:** Introducing scientific principles and basic concepts may involve direct instruction to ensure a solid understanding.
- **History and Geography:** Teachers often provide foundational knowledge in history and geography through lectures and structured lessons.
- **Foreign Language Basics:** Initial stages of learning a new language might involve teacher-centered instruction for vocabulary and grammar.

While teacher-centered instruction can be effective for building foundational knowledge, it's important to strike a balance with student-centered methods to foster critical thinking and application skills. As students progress, incorporating more interactive and collaborative learning approaches becomes valuable.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the teacher-centered approach brings forth both merits and drawbacks in the realm of education. While it fosters structured learning environments, facilitates efficient content delivery, and allows for effective classroom management, it may inadvertently stifle student engagement, hinder critical thinking, and limit creativity. Striking a balance between teacher-centered and student-centered methodologies could be the key to harnessing the benefits of both, creating a dynamic and adaptive educational experience that caters to diverse learning styles and prepares students for the challenges of the modern world.

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