

Excursion Method of Teaching

Dr. PK Astalin

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Education, University of Allahabad, Allahabad

Dr. Sangeeta Chauhan

Asst. Professor, School of Education, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow

Abstract :- Experience is very powerful source of knowledge. It can be gain by interacting any living or non-living objects. The extension of knowledge is expanding day to day in the present era. Teaching is a form of interaction between two or more than two person for transmitting information by different ways. The way of transmitting information by the interaction between two or more people in a disciplined manner is known as teaching method. Excursion method is an impressive and important teaching method which can be used in many disciplines like as geography, history, physics, chemistry, culture, political science, archeology, geophysics, genetics, literature, music, fine art, etc. Specially, this method is used in behavioral sciences. The word 'excursion' means a journey, trip, tour planned for social studies students in which the students actually visit places or site and has the first hand experience which excursion results in easy, interesting and effective learning. It provides ample opportunities to student for 'seeing' 'hearing' examining, gathering data, and asking questions, such excursion are most conducive to learning. Excursion method of teaching provides an opportunity to learners to visit different places across the world for their academic enhancement. Main features and purposes of this method are elaborated briefly. Types of excursion and its steps involved in this method are explained. Authors also explain the major characteristics of excursion method of teaching including with its merits and limitations. Finally, the major precautions of excursion method of teaching and some suggested excursions are briefly discussed in this article.

Introduction :- Experiences can be gain by sensory organs. Children and adults inspire by visual and sensory experiences to enhance their knowledge. In the early childhood period there are huge opportunities to expose children for acquiring new

experiences through excursions being one method. Field trip, tour are the synonyms of excursion. Lucy Mitchell, a pioneer thinker of early childhood education considered field trips should be a vital part of the social studies programme.

Children have the opportunity to experience real life from outside the classroom with their teachers, peers or family. Through taking a trip children can observe social systems and the different roles such as fire and police protection, traffic control, banking, shopping and other relative systems can understand easily. Excursions also provide children with first hand experiences in which they can develop further in language and literacy, gaining new vocabulary and problem-solving skills. The involvement of parents and related family members can encourage children to have weekend trip to nearest visiting places.

In the early childhood setting, an excursion needs to be well planned for travel, meals, written permission, water arrangement, medicine kit etc. for the day. A carefully planned trip will result in benefits to learn about the world around them. Children's learning and development are enhanced through direct interaction with not only the man made world around them, but the natural world too. It reminds us to ensure our visits for establishing a lifelong love and enjoyment of our natural world. Being in contact with the natural world develops a love of nature and children can truly learn to become caretakers and nurturer's of our environment. Children can become social and environmental problem solvers by developing values of co-operation and sharing responsibility to each others.

Zoo, animal parks, beach, rivers, mountains are the places where children can see, touch and feel living animals, insects, birds and sea

creatures which result a wonderful way to increase children's knowledge and appreciation of the other creatures in our environment. Excursions are also a fantastic way to empower children to explore confidently and ask questions to make sense of the world they see around them. It increases the enthusiasm questioning skills in children. Children also learn different social rules in different settings. For example, in a library or the Museum people are advised or requested to speak quieter and respectful tone of voice. Excursions are a unbelievable medium for children and adults to learn alongside each other and make discoveries together. Children and adults enhance experiences through sharing knowledge, listening and talking to each other.

Excursion Method of Teaching :- The word 'excursion' means a journey, trip, tour planned for social studies students in which the students actually visit places or site and has the first hand experience which excursion results in easy, interesting and effective learning. It provides ample opportunities to student for 'seeing' 'hearing' examining, gathering data, and asking questions, such excursion are most conducive to learning. Excursion method of teaching provides an opportunity to learners to visit different places across the world for their academic enhancement.

Research states that excursions are effective and novel pedagogy and teachers report wanting to use them more frequently. However, for optimal learning benefit the outcomes of the excursion need to be integrated into the set teaching program (Michie, 1998). Short excursions for education or for observations of natural phenomena are called field trips. One-day educational field studies are often made by classes as extracurricular exercises, e.g. to visit a natural or geographical feature. Excursion provides natural learning environments to children as well as adults too. Webb (2000) emphasizes natural learning environments (NLE). Not everyone learns in the same way, nor do they have the same learning ability. Some students learn better in school environments whereas others do not. Perhaps their learning needs don't fit into the normal classroom structure and environment. This is when

the use of natural learning environments may be beneficial. Webb (2000) suggested that a natural learning environment (NLE) is a form of alternative education. NLE are considered to be places of education that tap into the natural learning abilities of a student.

Features of Excursion Method of Teaching :

- It makes learning more effective to gain real ideas on the topic.
- It motivates students through increased interest and curiosity which results students will develop positive attitudes in students toward related classroom activities.
- It increases student-student and student-teacher social interaction which supports cooperative learning strategies. This method provides an opportunity to involve students, parents, and the teachers in the instructional program. The interaction between students within themselves will also be increased when they work in groups. Moreover, the interaction between the students and teacher will enhance as the students will have to discuss to the teachers when they have doubts.
- It develops social awareness among people which results to bring close to each person of community. It makes students aware of learning activities in everyday life.

Purpose of Excursion Method of Teaching :

- To enhance the curriculum. This method provides opportunity students to involve in a real world experience which makes learning more meaningful and memorable comparing to regular classroom instructional programs.
- To enrich experiential learning experiences. To meet first hand information.
- To develop concrete skills such as note taking. Students have to develop various skills such as note taking skills, speaking skills, writing skills will enhance.
- To increase involvement in a real world experiences.
- To understand social laboratory setting. Students may not learn the importance of social skills until they observe what goes on in a

real society where interrelationship, social mobility, social change etc. can be realized.

Types of Excursion Method of Teaching :

1. Instructional Excursion :- An instructional excursion is a visit by a class or group of classes to a location outside the regular classroom, which is designed to allow the students to achieve specific course objectives, which cannot be achieved as efficiently by other means. An example of an instructional field trip is a visit to botanical garden to study about different kind of flower.

2. School Contests or Festivals :- In a school contest or festival students get an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills through subject area instruction. Contests, competitions, festivals, or evaluations may involve teams of students from more than one class or subject. The school level essay competition, games, cultural demonstration etc. are some examples of school contests or festivals.

3. Motivational Excursion :- A motivational excursion is an extra-campus activity. It is not a part of a classroom activity. It provides a motivational incentive for the school, club, group, or class and is related to improving the school climate. An example of a motivational trip is an end of year visit to Buddha point by a student body.

Step in Excursion Method of Teaching :

1. Selection of Places of Excursion

- Identify objectives and plan of evaluation for the field visit.
- Select the place to visit and arrange date and time.
- Conduct pre-visit to familiarize yourself with the major features of the field and obtain address, directions, contact person and mobile numbers.

2. Logistics Planning :

- Apply for administrative approval and file requisition for transportation.
- Make arrangement for meals and develop

schedule for the day.

- Arrange special equipments like cameras and collect money for admission fees if the site demands.
- Inform parents about the trips.
- Create a list of student names and home phone number for emergency.

3. Field Trip Preparation/Pre-trip discussion :

- Discuss the purpose of the field trip.
- Show photographs or posters of the site.
- Set a standard conduct and discuss money usage, lunch plans, dress code and other necessary things.
- Discuss how to ask good questions and make a list of open-ended observation questions to gather information.
- Overview the field trip schedule.

4. The Field Trip :

- Let students to sketch if it is necessary.
- Ask prepared questions and note the answers.
- Do things that you have planned.

5. Post-field Trip :

- Let student to share their observations and reactions to field trip experiences.
- Create classroom bulletin board displaying materials collected while on field trip.
- Let class to compose thank-you letter to those who helped during the field trip. Include special information learned.

6. Evaluating Field trip :

- What was the unique educational value in this trip?
- Did students meet the objectives?
- Was there adequate time?
- Was there adequate staff and adult supervision?
- What might be done differently to be better?
- What points to be emphasized next time?
- What problems should be addressed in the future?

Advantages of Excursion Method of Teaching :

There are some advantages of excursion method of teaching which are given below:

- Excursion method of teaching provides direct source of knowledge and acquaint the student with first hand information.
- They provide an opportunity to the student for development of his aesthetic sense.
- It helps in developing qualities of resourcefulness, self- confidence, initiative and leadership amongst students.
- It helps in developing cooperative attitude and various others
- It helps in proper utilization of leisure.
- It Brings reality in teaching. It motivates the students for self-study and self-activity.
- Gives concrete experience.

Disadvantages of Excursion Method of Teaching :

These are following:

- Time consuming.
- It is not applicable to all the students of the students.
- It is expensive.

Precautions Excursion Method of Teaching : There are some major precautions while this method is used for teaching the teacher should keep the following points in mind:

- Discipline should be maintained while the students are learning during excursion.
- Lodging and food arrangement should be made comfortable.
- The teacher should direct and guide the students in proper manner with the help of map, charts etc.
- After the excursions or travels the teacher should point out the particular chapter to strengthen the experience and to give a solid foundation to the knowledge.
- Students should be asked and encouraged to note down important things. Such things shall

be useful in the classroom and proper study of the subject.

Some Suggested Excursions :

(a) Excursions to Industrial Centres : It will be quite useful and will benefit the students and enrich their experiences about working of industries in India.

(b) Excursions to Places of Geographical Importance : Places of geographical importance should be arranged to explain to students the need and importance of locality and regions of the country in context of trade, commerce and industry etc. Such an excursion will help the students to get an idea of the exact location of dams, projects, industries, ports and harbors etc.

(c) Visits to Museum : National museums, planetariums, science city and laboratories are excellent centres for giving real knowledge to students in various areas of learning. Such knowledge is more stable and permanent.

Conclusion : Excursion method of teaching is an alternative teaching strategy of classroom teaching. It represents outgrowth of years of experience in the training of teachers. It has been tried and tested by teachers, critic teachers, a usable supervisors and the author and found to be and workable teaching plan. It is with the ideas of helping those who earnestly wish to engage in field work that this plan is presented

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