

Topic: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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METHODS OF TEACHING HOME SCIENCE

Communication is the process by which messages are transferred from a source to a receiver. It is also a process of sending and receiving messages through appropriate channels between two people or group of people. Channel of communication constitutes the medium through which information or message is conveyed. These channels or methods of teaching / learning or techniques of communication may be classified or discussed in many ways. They include both formal and non-formal teaching methods and use of audio/visual aids. Details of these were discussed in the earlier text. In this chapter we will learn a few selected methods and aids which can be used in the class room by the teachers and students to present ideas and information in simple ways. Home Science has two distinct situations of teaching, i.e. formal and non-formal. Learners under the non-formal education system differ from learners under the formal system of education, in their background, resources and motivation. The traditional classroom teaching methods used for formal groups may not be equally effective with the non-formal. In a formal situation, teacher-oriented methods can be used whereas in non-formal teaching situations learner-oriented methods have to be implemented. However, whatever may be the teaching situation, the basic values, principles and limitations of the teaching methods remain the same. A communicator should be able to adopt each method according to the situation by modifying or improvising it. For example, in a formal situation, necessary classroom arrangements have to be made if demonstration or workshop methods are to be used, but in a non-formal situation student may be seated under a tree or in the verandah of a school, temple or panchayat office.

LECTURE METHOD

Lecture has been the most widely used method of teaching in all types of higher education including Home Science. In spite, of many criticisms regarding its effectiveness as a method of teaching, it seems to have considerable potential for achieving certain objectives of teaching, such as imparting basic information to students particularly since Home Science is an applied discipline, involving teaching of many facts and theories relating to various subjects. Lecture involves many activities, such as, introducing the topic, illustrating the examples, using

blackboard, questioning and explaining the content. The success of this method largely depends upon how it is delivered.

Values of the Lecture Method

1. It is an effective method for introducing a new topic or lesson. Through a lecture, one can give an overview of the lesson and have a quick review of the completed work.
2. Large portions can be covered in a relatively short period as the teacher prepares the lecture, referring to various books and author's points of views which are presented to the class in a condensed form within a given period of time.
3. It provides the most up-to-date information, since the lecturer can modify his/her lecture up to the last minute.
4. It is the most explanatory method as the communicator can explain as much detail as he/she wants. Moreover, immediate feedback from students helps the lecturer to know which points of the lesson need to be further explained and clarified.

Using Lecture Method

Lecturing is an art. There is no particular style of lecturing. Styles vary from lecturer to lecturer, and its effectiveness depends on an individual's speaking skills. However, one can try to make his/her lecture more effective by employing the following guidelines:

1. Planning Stage

a. Analyze the group/audience A lecturer should know the background of the group to whom the lecture is to be delivered. For example, if the group is heterogenous, then the pace of lecturing would vary, amount of stress to be put on various points also would vary. If the group is very intelligent and mature, it may stimulate the lecturer to present challenging material to the group. The time available for lecturing also should be kept in mind so that the lecture can be scheduled accordingly.

b. Organize the content

Depending on the objectives of the lesson, select the content and related information from different references and decide the sequence and mode of presentation. Prepare lecture notes covering major points to be covered in a lecture.

2. Presentation Stage

Effective presentation requires certain qualities on the part of the lecturer, such as, a well-modulated voice, gestures, humour, pause, good command over language, and self-confidence. The lecturer should be able to establish rapport with the group. This can be done with movement of eyes from one side of the class to the other, by questioning the group and by seeking their participation in class discussion. Presentation of a lecture should be done along with the use of teaching aids, structured notes or handouts. At the end the lecture should be summarized, and references for reading should be given to students.

Post-presentation Stage

This stage requires the lecturer to give an assignment to the students based on the lecture previously delivered. This could be a reading assignment, writing assignment, gathering some information, designing a room or garment, and so on.

Disadvantages of the Lecture Method

1. It may result in one-way communication, and students may become passive learners, if their participation is not sought at various stages of the lecture. Thus, it may limit the opportunity for interaction.
2. The topic/subject may not be of equal interest to all students.
3. Poor audio attenders may be at a disadvantage.
4. Only theoretical topics can be covered through this method. In short, the lecture method can be used successfully only through proper planning and effective presentation. Because of its formal nature, this method may not be effective with non-formal education groups.