

How data analytics have transformed learning and preparation strategies?

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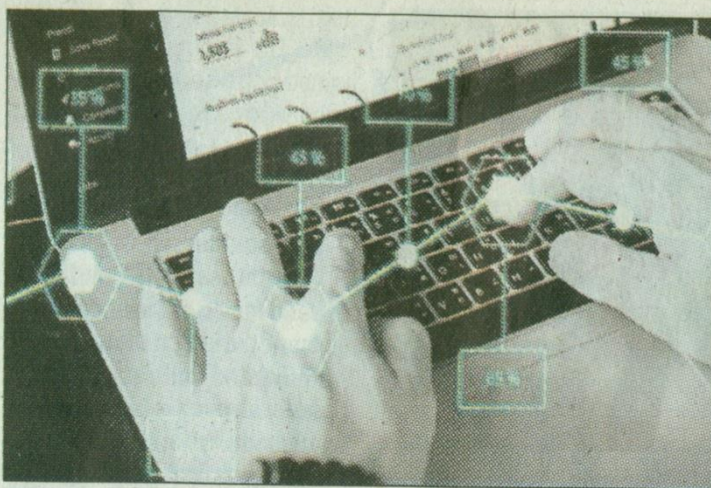
Over the last few years, digital technologies have grown rapidly to be widely embraced as a supplement or even at times as a replacement to traditional teaching methods. This has resulted in a whole new methodology and varied styles of student-teacher engagement. Tech and analytics have been gradually inching into the world of traditional education and have brought along an "Information Explosion." This has made teaching, learning and even test preparation a far more flexible, relevant and personalized experience, than ever before.

Most curricula and grading systems, be it for K12 education, higher education or professional coaching classes, have been designed with a mythical average student in mind.

Many believe that this approach might not work with 'Generation Y' or the 'Digital Natives' who have access to an onslaught of information at their fingertips. They are believed to be more inclined towards being lifelong learners and therefore the profile of students is slowly changing.

Today, the facets of education look and operate much more differently, meaning that a "blended" test preparation strategy is what most students opt for.

SCOPE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION



Analytics brings in diverse perspectives

GETTY IMAGES

The advances in technology has brought along with it the concept of non-traditional normal into the mix. No longer is the teacher the principal source of information, instead they have largely taken up the role of a guide and mentor.

Learning is no longer limited to class hours and students now look at technology access and its varied applications, touching their lives, as an extension of teaching.

As a result, students now have a variety of test preparation strategies to choose from, all of which can be accessed conveniently from their smartphones, laptops, desktops or tablets. There are live group practice sessions, personalized study planners, practical videos by professionals on specialized topics on video sharing websites like YouTube, and even gamification integrated.

Gamification in e-learning is

the concept of incorporating gaming elements into the learning experience.

Furthermore, the fusion of key facets of real-world training complementing mobile technologies creates a far richer learning environment than simply rote learning or reading a book. This has also resulted in an increase of contextual understanding, which prepares students for employment far better than traditional methods.

Big data has also burst into the field of education and is radically altering its very essence. Another big change that it has brought about is in the grading system; the measurement of scores has always been based on examinations or assignments that students turn in.

However, by constantly monitoring every action of students, scores can be awarded instantly based on often ignored parameters such as how much research

one did, how long they took to answer each question or how well they react to stress along with numerous other factors.

It is well established that every student learns differently and therefore understanding how they navigate learning systems could eventually help determine their final grade more holistically.

This means a revolution in the education system; not merely by offering a personalized learning experience but also a personalized grading system.

THE ERA OF LEARNING ANALYTICS

Analytics essentially brings in diverse perspectives and encourages out of the box strategies, by using big data to influence teaching and learning from varied and refreshing perspectives. By applying analytics in the lives of students, institutions can empower them and also encourage them to be more responsible.

The amount of data that is amassed from students, intentionally or unintentionally is a treasure trove of information.

Of course, this also brings privacy issues into the fore, often leading to legal and ethics oriented arguments. However, online portals and institutions on their part have been constantly improvising and upgrading their infrastructure to ensure that the personal details of students remain secure at all times.

The social media feeds, inter or intra student interactions, attendance records, assignment submission patterns and other factors can all be analyzed to help students make better informed choices while preparing for an important test. It could also alert teachers to possible at-risk students who need further support. Practice tests can also be marked and analyzed instantly, which means that students can take as many tests as they think they need to reach their target score in the main examination. With advances in test preparation online, students are also given the option of whether they want their scores to be sent directly to them or whether they wish to assess how they did in comparison with other students.

Experts believe that analytics can be the most effective tool for learner motivation; leading to a much more dynamic route towards the ability to appraise new situations and information, and in instilling reflective skills to draw on while answering tests.

The future looks bright for the field of education with new tools being constantly developed so that the obsession of society with numbers and scores decreases. Technology and analytics is paving the way for a far less stressful and much more valuable test preparation strategy.

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