UNIT 13 RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTION

Structure

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13.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have discussed three major important activities with regard to classroom instruction. These are: planning of instruction, developing instructional strategies and managing classroom instruction. All these activities involve the use of a variety of resources on the part of the teacher. The quality of instruction depends upon the appropriate use of these resources by the teacher. It is, therefore, very relevant to know about these resources and how best they can be used for instructional purposes. In this unit, we will discuss the meaning of resource, a resource centre and also examine various types of resources available in a resource centre. The roles of the teacher, the student and the technical staff will also be highlighted in this unit. How the teacher, the student and the environment can be used as instructional resources will also be focussed upon in this unit.

13.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- define resource and a resource centre,
- list resource centre accommodation,
- make a list of the furniture required for the resource centre,
- list various types of resources,
- describe the roles of the teacher, the student and the technical staff in a resource centre,
- describe how the teacher, the student and the environment can function as resources for instruction.
13.3 DEFINING RESOURCE

All of us are familiar with the word resource. We also use this word very often in the educational context when we say resources are essential for effective classroom instruction. You must have noticed that many teachers use a lot of resources during teaching while many others carry out teaching with little or at best only a few resources. In the former case, student learning is facilitated to a greater degree while in the latter case it is not. What, then, is meant by resources?

Resources (educational resources) are any person, material, situation and experience organised, or created, to help the student or learner learn actively and attain the objectives of instruction. In other words, anything which facilitates student learning is called a resource. The resources may be used by teachers, students or both during instruction so as to maximise the attainment of instructional objectives.

13.4 DEFINING A RESOURCE CENTRE

From the earlier discussion, it is clear that if the resources are to be used during instruction either by teachers or learners or both, then resources are to be made available to them. Consequently, these resources are to be kept and maintained somewhere. This location is known as the resource centre. Thus, a resource centre is a place which houses print and other instructional resources and where resource-based learning may be carried out. A resource centre provides storage facilities for resources and a procedure for retrieving them. Resource centres may have other services as well e.g. production facilities. Since such a resource centre is being used for facilitating learning, it is often called a resource centre.

There are several other terms like resource area, resource collection, resource bank, resource island and resource peninsula which you may come across in literature. In order to know the meaning of these terms, you should refer to the glossary given at the end of this block.

13.4.1 Resource Centre Accommodation

Every educational institution has normal classrooms. The existing classroom may be converted into a resource centre. The modification of existing ordinary classroom can be done with less cost. The furniture can be re-arranged and partitions, if needed, can be provided with the help of plywood. The resource centre must have some place where students can work, the staff can sit, equipments can be stored, technicians can repair equipment, etc. There should be some space for giving instructions to the students. A modern resource centre should be especially designed for accommodating up to 50 students at one time.

13.4.2 Furniture in a Resource Centre

Apart from the usual classroom furniture, a resource centre requires the following furniture:

- Worktables
- Storage furniture
- Display stands
- Catalogue (index) furniture

Worktables: In the resource centre learners work in a group or individually. Worktables are required for providing work facilities. Learners do need some privacy while working. Sometimes, they need large working surfaces to spread maps, charts, plans, diagrams and illustrations. Thus, a resource centre may have several worktables; or it may have custom-built working surfaces which are near most of the stocked resources, but they are kept separate from the carrels.
Storage furniture: Storage in a resource centre, can usually be a problem because of the variety of shapes and sizes of the materials used in instruction. It would, therefore, be essential to procure containers of varying capacities for proper storage of items. One should try to use containers of the same type as far as possible, thereby avoiding a haphazard collection of a variety of boxes and cabinets. Here the golden rule is that storage and the type of container should provide easy identification of access to the contents. For easy identification, the resources may be stored in the following three ways:

i) Resources may be stored by subject area. Here all items concerning the same subject area are grouped together. This is very convenient for the user, but difficulties always arise when media related apparatus of different shapes and sizes have to be kept together.

ii) Resources may be stored by type. In this method, similar types of material are stored together, e.g. all video cassettes, all books, all tape-slides, etc., are located in the same place. This means that the user will have to visit several locations to collect the variety of required materials. Storage according to this method leads to a more judicious use of space and allows easy access to and checking of materials.

iii) Special resources may be located together, even if the items are of a mixed type, where the trainees can have quick access to these special resources. Finding the items easily gives the users confidence to use the resource centre.

One of the common problems related with storage is that learners normally do not replace the resource materials in the correct place after use. Thus, it is essential to persuade the learners to replace the resource materials in the correct place after completion of the task. The other method is to ask learners not to keep the resources at their original location, but place these on shelves or in some containers meant for this purpose. Later on the attendants of the resource centre can replace the resources at their correct location.

Display stands: As mentioned earlier, the resources may be used both by teachers as well as the learners. One may also display the completed work of the learners of newly acquired resources. For this, display stands are required. These can be of pin board, or soft board type. The display stands can be fixed on the wall or be portable. Portable stands are very useful because they can be moved around the centre to lend variety and interest to the layout. Magnetic display boards may also be used. Whatever might be the type of display stand, it is important to have the departmental name and all displays must have proper headings. Where-ever required, colours may be used to make the display attractive.

Catalogue (index) furniture: The resource centre contains a variety of resources. These are available in the store. The learner would like to know what resources are available. To facilitate this and make it user friendly, it is essential to index the resources. It should be noted that an index not only catalogues or lists the information, but it also describes them briefly. Both lists and descriptions are available at the same place. Indexing should be done on cards. Index cards arranged in alphabetic order should be made available in the resource centre. For this, special furniture is required. The furniture which helps in storing indexed cards is called catalogue furniture. Catalogue furniture can be designed according to the requirement of the resource centre.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.
    b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

i) Define an educational resource in your own words.
   
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ii) What are the main characteristics of a resource centre?

iii) Describe what type of furniture is required in a resource centre and for what purposes.

13.5 TYPES OF RESOURCES IN A RESOURCE CENTRE

The resources available in the resource centre are of two types. These are print-based resources, and non-print based resources. Brief details of each of these are as follows:

13.5.1 Print-based Resources

These are mainly of five types:

- Reference books and manuals
- Textbooks
- Periodicals, technical and professional magazines and journals collections
- Instructional materials

Reference books and manuals: These are usually expensive resources the learners refer to when working in the resource centre. Normally, two or three copies of each volume are kept, according to the users’ likely demand. These books and manuals must not be taken out of the resource centre.

Textbooks: It is essential that course related standard textbooks, frequently referred to and used during training, are always available. To ensure this, some copies of textbooks should be kept in the reference section. These are always available there and these are not taken out of the resource centre. Textbooks should also be available for loan.

Periodicals, technical and professional magazines and journals: These are instructional resources which learners refer for state-of-the-art information. Though quite expensive, these are of much use to both teachers and learners. Normally these are not issued on loan to users.

Collections: These consist of a variety of materials, sometimes retained under subject headings and sometimes kept loose. Collections include newspaper cuttings, cut-out articles from magazines and commercially bought information packs, photographs, extracts from the work of previous learners, diagrams, graphs, and other types of written and graphic materials.

Collections can be made both by the staff as well as by the learners and they (the learners) should be encouraged to collect and develop banks of resource materials. Collections are quite easy but indexing and storing them is quite a problem. For proper indexing and storing of collections learners should be encouraged to help.
Instructional materials: These include self-instructional materials because learners can use them independently during the process of instruction. Various type of self-instructional materials are available in the market. These are programmed learning texts, semi-programmed learning modules, capsules, etc.

13.5.2 Non-print Based Resources

Non-print based resources include audio-visual equipment which can be classified under audio, still image projection, moving image projection and other categories. Audio equipments consist of audio tape player, audio cassette player with headphones, audio tape recorder playback, audio variable speed playback and recorder, record players stereo, and radio. Still image projection equipments include stereoviewer, 8 mm projectors, projectors with rear visions, 35 mm film strip/slide projectors with built-in sound for cassette or disc, 35 mm synchronised unit e.g., carousel with cassette synchronisation unit, 35 mm synchronised units with back projection, 35 mm hand-help viewers, opaque (episcope or epidiascope) projectors, overhead projectors, microfilm reader and micro fiche reader, 8 mm projectors reel and cartridge, 16 mm projectors, video tape recorder and video cassette recorder, VHS, U-matic, Betamax come under moving image projection equipment resources. Audio-visual equipment resources also include video cameras portable, 16 mm camera optional, 8 mm camera optional, still cameras with varying functions, lighting units, projection screens, equipment trolleys, tripods, video monitors black/white and colour and computers with as well as without multimedia facilities. Audio-video equipment can be used by teachers as well as learners.

Check Your Progress 2
Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.
       b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.
What type of resources are available in a resource centre? Describe them briefly.

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13.6 USERS AND THEIR ROLE IN A RESOURCE CENTRE

The main users in a resource centre are the teachers, the learners and the technical staff. All of them have specific roles to play at the resource centre. The roles of each of these users are described in the following sub-sections.

13.6.1 Role of the Teacher

In a resource centre, the teacher should:
- plan and organise the distribution of resource materials.
- arrange the time-table for the use of the centre.
- plan and arrange accommodation including the layout of the furniture and equipment.
Planning and Management of Instruction

- ensure the maintenance and repair of furniture and equipment, disposal of irretrievably broken and obsolete machines and update the resources.
- arrange and maintain exhibition.
- maintain an efficient system for recording the use of and re-ordering of consumable materials.
- ensure that all 'software' resources, e.g., print-based instructional materials and non-print based instructional materials like, video and audio-tapes, computer programmes, etc., are indexed and maintained by a proper indexing and retrieval system, correctly stored, revised and replaced when necessary.
- ensure that the production service, such as audio-video, photographic, printing and reprographic operate smoothly and provide staff and learners with what they need.
- encourage staff to develop/produce their own learning resources.
- disseminate information about the facilities available at the resource centre.
- consider how resource centre provision may be actively integrated into general training structure.
- arrange for the piloting of resources at the centre so that they are validated before use.
- evaluate the uses and benefits of the centre through formal questionnaires and informal charts with staff and learners.
- constantly check that there are resources available to support any externally validated syllabi.
- organise, control and monitor an efficient loan service.
- control the budget of the centre.
- maintain inventories of equipment with the help of computers.
- ensure that the resource centre is cost-effective.

13.6.2 Role of Learners

In the resource centre, the learners should:
- get the required resources by themselves.
- find the resources and get them issued.
- return the resources to the resource centre after their use.
- maintain discipline while working in the resource centre.
- help in maintaining and arranging the resources in the resource centre.
- inform the teacher or resource centre staff in case of any mishapening.
- encourage their fellow-learners to use the resource centre to the maximum.
- inform the resource centre staff about their special requirements.
- develop their own resources.

13.6.3 Role of Technical Staff in a Resource Centre

In a resource centre, the technical staff should:
- maintain records, inventories and accounts.
- maintain the information indexing system.
- assist staff and learners to operate the indexing system and help them locate information directly through resource items.
- order new equipment, consumable materials, periodicals, books, etc.
- operate and maintain an administrative computer system.
- maintain the cataloguing index.
13.7. OTHER RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTION

Apart from the material resources in a resource centre, there are other kinds of resources also which can be effectively utilised for instructional purposes. These may be the teacher himself, his students and the environment within which instructional activities are carried out. Let us discuss each of these for instructional purposes.

13.7.1 Teacher as a Resource

Although a teacher uses material resources for his teaching, he himself is an important instructional resource. As most of the classroom activities are dominated and controlled by the teacher, his knowledge, skills, experiences and competencies decide to a large extent the effectiveness of teaching. The teacher as an individual is unique. He/She gets experiences of teaching different individuals. A teacher should enrich his/her intellectual resources from time to time. For this, he/she has to attend national seminars, conferences, symposia, etc., to update his/her knowledge and skills. The Teacher should read the latest books, journals, magazines, etc., to keep abreast of the latest developments in the area of study. He/She must develop positive personality characteristics and moral values. He/She should be an ideal human being for the students. He/She should be a friend, philosopher and guide for them. All these qualities go a long way in making instruction effective.

13.7.2 Student as a Resource

In the process of instruction, the student is a learner. A student can also help in making instruction joyful, interesting, useful and effective. Through our experience we know that the majority of our classrooms are boring. Students do not take part in instructional activities. They do not ask questions even when nothing is understood by them. If this trend is reversed and students are involved actively in the instructional process, teaching-learning can be made effective as well as a rewarding experience. In a classroom there are students with varied personalities, socio-economic backgrounds and intellectual abilities. All of them also have varieties of experiences. If all these are explored and integrated into the teacher’s teaching, teaching certainly becomes very effective. Not only that, instruction becomes lively and students take a lot of interest in the instructional process.

Students can also be helpful in producing different types of material resources as part of their project work, assignments or field work. These material resources may be kept in the resource centre for future use by learners. Thus, learners are also important resources for instruction.
13.7.3 Environment as a Resource

Environment plays an important role in the instructional process. Environment can be the student's own classroom environment, school environment, home environment, playground environment, community environment, etc. There is a lot in the environment from which one can learn. While teaching in the classroom, the teacher can draw examples from the environment students are familiar with. Difficult concepts can be made more intelligible with the help of examples related to the daily life of the students. For example, the concept of 'Barter System' in Economics can be very well explained to students by citing the example of how we exchange goods for goods in our day-to-day life. There are also many natural objects available in the surroundings which the teacher can refer to in the course of instruction. Their judicious use make the instruction effective. For example, while teaching about the river and its utility in a geography class, the teacher can refer to a nearby river or if possible can take students to a river. Hence, the environment to which a learner belongs must be taken into account while transacting learning experiences in the classroom. This use of environment can be extremely useful while designing or developing a curriculum. Environment also contributes to the development of teaching aids. Thus, the environment acts as an important resource for instruction.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.
   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

i) How can the teacher and students be regarded as resources for instruction?

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ii) Briefly describe environment as a resource with three suitable examples from your subject area.

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13.8 LET US SUM UP

Resources are very much needed for effective classroom instruction. They not only facilitate the teaching-learning process but also help in achieving instructional objectives. Instructional resources may include any person, material, situation and organised experience or the environment within which instruction takes place.
Material resources need some place where they could be kept. Such a place is called Resource Centre. Resource centre accommodates various kinds of furniture like worktables, storage furniture, display stands, etc. One can find both print-based and non-print based resources in a resource centre. The teacher, student and technical staff have certain roles to play in strengthening the functioning of the Resource Centre. Apart from material resources, the teacher, the students and environment can also be used as resources for classroom instruction.

### 13.9 UNIT-END EXERCISE

Visit a resource centre of your school or the school in your locality and prepare a list of items available there i.e. the resource centre. Describe how the resource centre is used by the teachers, the students and others in the school.

### 13.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. i) Resources are any person, material, situation and experience organised, or created, to help a student or learner learn actively and attain the objectives of instruction.

   ii) The main characteristics of a resource centre are the following:

   a) It has space for students to work, and staff to sit.

   b) It has space where equipment can be stored and technicians can repair equipment, etc.

   c) It has space for giving instructions to the students.

   iii) The various type of the furniture available in a resource centre includes worktables, storage furniture, display stands and catalogue furniture. Worktables are needed for learners to do their academic work. Storage furniture is required to contain materials resources of different shapes and sizes. Display stands are required to display the completed work of the learners or newly acquired materials. Catalogue furniture helps in storing indexed cards.

2. The resources available in a resource centre are mainly of two types, namely, print-based resources and non-print based resources. Print-based resources can broadly be categorised into reference books, manuals, textbooks, periodicals, collections and instructional materials. Non-print based resources include audio-visual equipment which can be classified under audio, still image projection, moving image projection and other categories.

3. Three important roles of a teacher in a resource centre are should be

   a) disseminate information about the facilities available at the resource centre.

   b) consider how resource centre provision may be actively integrated into general training structures.

   c) evaluate the use and benefits of the centre through formal questionnaires and informal charts with staff and learners.

4. i) A teacher is regarded as a resource because his knowledge, skills, experiences and competencies decide to a large extent the effectiveness of teaching. Similarly, students are regarded as resources because their personalities, socio-economic backgrounds and intellectual abilities are important for instructional design.

   ii) Environment within which a student functions, acts as a resource for instruction. A teacher should, therefore, utilise students' environment for instruction. For example, while teaching the process of manufacturing chemicals in a science class, the teacher should take his students to a nearby chemical factory and provide them concrete experiences of how chemicals are manufactured. Similarly a history teacher while teaching ancient sculpture may take his students to a nearby museum and acquaint them with ancient sculptures.
13.11 SUGGESTED READINGS


GLOSSARY

Carrel : It is a study-cum-workplace.

Resource area : It is another name for a resource centre.

Resource bank : It is a collection of resource items, to which training staff contribute material and which may or may not, have a simple indexing system.

Resource collection : It is an assembly of resource materials, stored and indexed for retrieval, but on a more modest scale than a resource centre.

Resource island : It is a centrally located area in a classroom where resources are made available.

Resource peninsula : It is an area on one side of a classroom where resources are available.