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## The Role of web quest program in higher Education

**Manjusha S. Walde**  
Research student

M.Ed., Ph.D.(Education)  
Dept of Education,

**Dr. Anand Madhavrao Wagh**  
Assistant Professor  
(Research Guide)

Dr. BAMU Aurangabad  
Dept of Lifelong Learning & Extension  
Dr. BAMU Aurangabad

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### Abstract

A 'webquest' is an inquiry-oriented activity that helps students to learn through gathering, analyzing and evaluating information from teacher-nominated Internet websites. This paper discusses an introductory webquest aimed at teaching and enhancing student learning through technology. The paper develops a rationale for teaching practices that encompass such a webquest and outlines a step-by-step approach complete with all necessary materials. The webquest also contains a questionnaire aimed at evaluating its value, and the findings reveal that students considered that it significantly enhanced their learning. Suggestions for further development of the webquest are identified.

### Introduction

Information and communication technologies have had a major impact on education and training around the world. There has recently been significant attention paid to the ways in which technology can be used to support students in Higher Education (HE). For example, telecommunication

technologies used in distance learning have many benefits such as:

- a) Cutting the costs of education;
- b) Improving access to education; and
- c) Providing time flexibility for learners .

computer assisted instruction (CAI) and learning style can significantly improve student achievement and attitudes while decreasing necessary instructional contact times. In one of the most comprehensive studies on the effectiveness of using computers to increase student achievement, found that computer based tutorials produce improvements in learning outcomes of approximately 20 percent above the average for non-computer based learning. Simulation, interactive video instruction, hypertext programs, bulletin boards and networks have also all been found to be effective in enhancing learning . In addition, educational technologies such as the internet, satellite interactive television, and interactive multi-media CD-ROMs are widely used in technologically advanced nations around the world. Technology is, however, regarded as a potentially valuable tool for improving teaching and learning in HE. At the same time, it should be noted that technology alone does not guarantee solutions to educational problems. It will only have a positive impact when used within the framework of a solid strategic plan for supporting learning and teaching. This article focuses on the use of the 'webquest' to support students and their learning for a particular set of activities and includes discussion of the definition, characteristics, and design of webquests.

### Webquest

The concept of webquest is relatively recent, dating from the mid-nineties. The term 'webquest', coined by Dodge, refers to: "An inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the web. Webquests are designed to use learners' time well, to focus on using information rather than looking for

it, and to support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation" Since then, the concept has become very popular in the academic world. Ezell et al (2003) point out that webquests can be developed for various subject areas at different educational levels. They argue that the webquest is a technological tool, which is frequently being used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Within the context of HE, the author believes that this type of technology has not been sufficiently used and there is room for further development. With a few appropriate modifications, Webquests can provide an effective instructional tool for university students. In order to introduce students to the challenge of webquests in HE, a multifaceted webquest activity was developed which is described and analysed in this article.

Webquests can be developed for various subject areas at different educational levels. The rationale for the use of the webquest for this module can be broken down into five main areas:

- Students are usually more motivated to use computer technology for research than the more traditional modes
- Students can find current information on research methods by using a range of resources that may otherwise be difficult or expensive to use
- Students have opportunities to be engaged with interactive resources through the worldwide web
- Research methods are an abstract subject in terms of its concepts and philosophies and it was felt that this webquest would enable students to link theory to practice
- Personal interest

### Webquest design

It was necessary to find a way to create a webquest that students could easily navigate, and that could blend easily into a module which was already being taught. The study

of research methods was a major core module for Level 2 students. The tutor chose to create a webquest that would include the concepts students need to know and provide an exciting, innovative method of delivery of research theory and knowledge for their learning development. The following acronym helps to explain these principles:

- Find great sites
- Orchestrate learners and resources
- Challenge learners to think
- Use the medium
- Scaffold high expectations'.

By following the five FOCUS principles, Dodge developed a generic five-step process that could be used to design a webquest (Dodge, 2002). These steps were to:

- a) Select a topic appropriate for webquests;
- b) Select a design that would fit the topic;
- c) Describe how students would be evaluated;
- d) Design the process by determining how specific resources could be explained further; and
- e) Modify and improve the webquest check capitalisation template.

These principles were considered in creating and designing the Research Methods webquest. Through this webquest, students would be able to learn about different research philosophies, the various research methods, techniques, and literature reviews. The intent of the webquest was to support a lesson and help leisure, tourism and hospitality students learn about the different research philosophies in social science.

In summary, the webquest consisted of six sections:

- **Introduction:** aims and objectives of the webquest
- **Task & Guidelines:** rationale and instructions
- **Resources:** visiting internet sites to gather information on each research philosophy
- **The Process:** five activities (steps)

- **Evaluation:** debate session
- **Conclusion:** summary of the points mentioned before

#### Webquest Organisation

The organisation of the webquest comprised **five sessions: Session One:** The overall purpose was to give students an idea about the webquest and to stimulate their thinking on the subject.

#### Session Two:

Students were asked to define some basic research concepts (e.g. research, literature, theory, primary and secondary research and so forth) and to submit their written answers in the following session.

#### Session Three:

The basic characteristics of every research philosophy such as positivism and phenomenology and its methods were discussed. Then the students were asked to investigate their personal predisposition towards particular research philosophies by answering the questions on the webquest website. Students were able to identify their preferred research philosophy and to know the results immediately after completing the questionnaire.

#### Session Four:

In this session every student was asked to prepare a one page paper justifying why they were happy or not happy with the results of the questionnaire. According to the results of the questionnaire, the class was divided into two groups: 45 students in Group One represented the quantitative researchers and 27 students in Group Two represented the qualitative researchers.

#### Session 5:

The truth about this topic is pretty complex - a lot of research scholars have different opinions about research methods and concepts .

All students, therefore, were encouraged to come to the class and participate in a debate to defend their favorite research philosophy and to evaluate their own argument. In the debate session,

the students were divided into two groups: the 'Positivistic Group' and the 'Phenomenological Group'. Each group had to make a short presentation in favor of their philosophies. This was followed by a structured debate of the main issues raised by the presentations and concluded with a closing statement. It was the students' responsibility to plan and manage the debate. The tutor was neutral and acting as the facilitator or organizer.

After the completion of the debate, the tutor gave the students a lecture on the combined research methods in order to conclude the activity. The students learnt that there was no right or wrong research method – all research methods have some merit. The value and relevance of the paradigm would depend on the nature of the research topic and its aims. Finally, students were asked to fill in a questionnaire in order to evaluate the webquest activity.

### Conclusions

This article has presented an exploratory study of the value of using the webquest as a technological tool to support learning and teaching in HE. It has discussed the importance of technology in HE in general, and the significance and development of the webquest concept in particular. The article focused on description, analysis and evaluation of a webquest which was specially designed for the Research Methods course. It was found that, to a great degree, students understood about the research philosophies and techniques in social science. They began to see the relationship between the research philosophy and the research aim(s) and question(s). Most students wanted to extend their learning beyond this activity and encouraged the tutor to support creation of more webquests for other areas of the curriculum. There was rarely a time when students were not enthusiastic about what they were learning and doing on the computers. Students also found a new appreciation for

the wealth of knowledge to be found on the Internet.

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## A STUDY OF CRITICAL REVIEWS OF POETRY RECITATION METHOD IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES

MR. Bharat Patel,  
Asst. Professor, Faculty of Education,  
Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya,  
Gandhinagar.

### INTRODUCTION

In the olden days the kind of education system we had is popularly known as 'Gurukul Education System'. In the Gurukul the Gurus used to impart education through singing of shlokas and other hymns. With the passage of time the pattern of education changed. In the modern time we can say that human kind is progressing fast in all spheres of life. Due to this knowledge explosion, the various concepts pertaining to human life have also changed. Education cannot be aloof from this movement.

Education evolved with the time, space and necessities. The modern researches in educational psychology have forced the educators and pupils to modify their basic understanding and walk along with development of the era. Unfortunately in this race, the human kind is overloaded with stress by the memorization of texts for the examination. In these days most of the teachers adopt lecture method no matter what the reason might be i.e. necessity of mass education, lack of resource, pressure of completion of syllabus etc. Mr. White Hatt expresses surprise and says "I do not understand how can the world of thought be established without proper establishment of

senses" Sri Aurobindo also felt uneasiness over the contemporary education system. According to him (in 1991) "collecting information is not an education; it is only a point to realize that knowledge is an object by which an individual updates himself. It is only to initiate the process of acquiring knowledge"

Frobel (1975) says that "child's mind is not like creating the pond rather it is like making a stream." Ivan Illich Remer has clearly expressed in his writing in 60s of 20th century. "Schools are dead. They should be uprooted from the society." But, is this the solution of the problem?

No! We need to identify our systemic deficiency and improvise upon them that are how we need to make school education strong." From the thoughts presented by the various educational thinkers it is evident that various methods of teaching affect the process of education. Hindi being the national language and the language of national pride, researcher decides to study the effect of poetry singing method on the academic achievement of students. The statement of the problem is stated and presented below.

### OBJECTIVES

- To review the findings of various researches related to the teaching methods of language
- To analyze the findings of various researches with specific reference to language acquisition through singing method
- To analyze the effect of learning language on boys and girls through singing methods
- To analyze the effect of learning language on rural and urban students through singing methods

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the research findings with specific reference to language acquisitions through singing method?
- How the language acquisition is different amongst boy students than the girl students