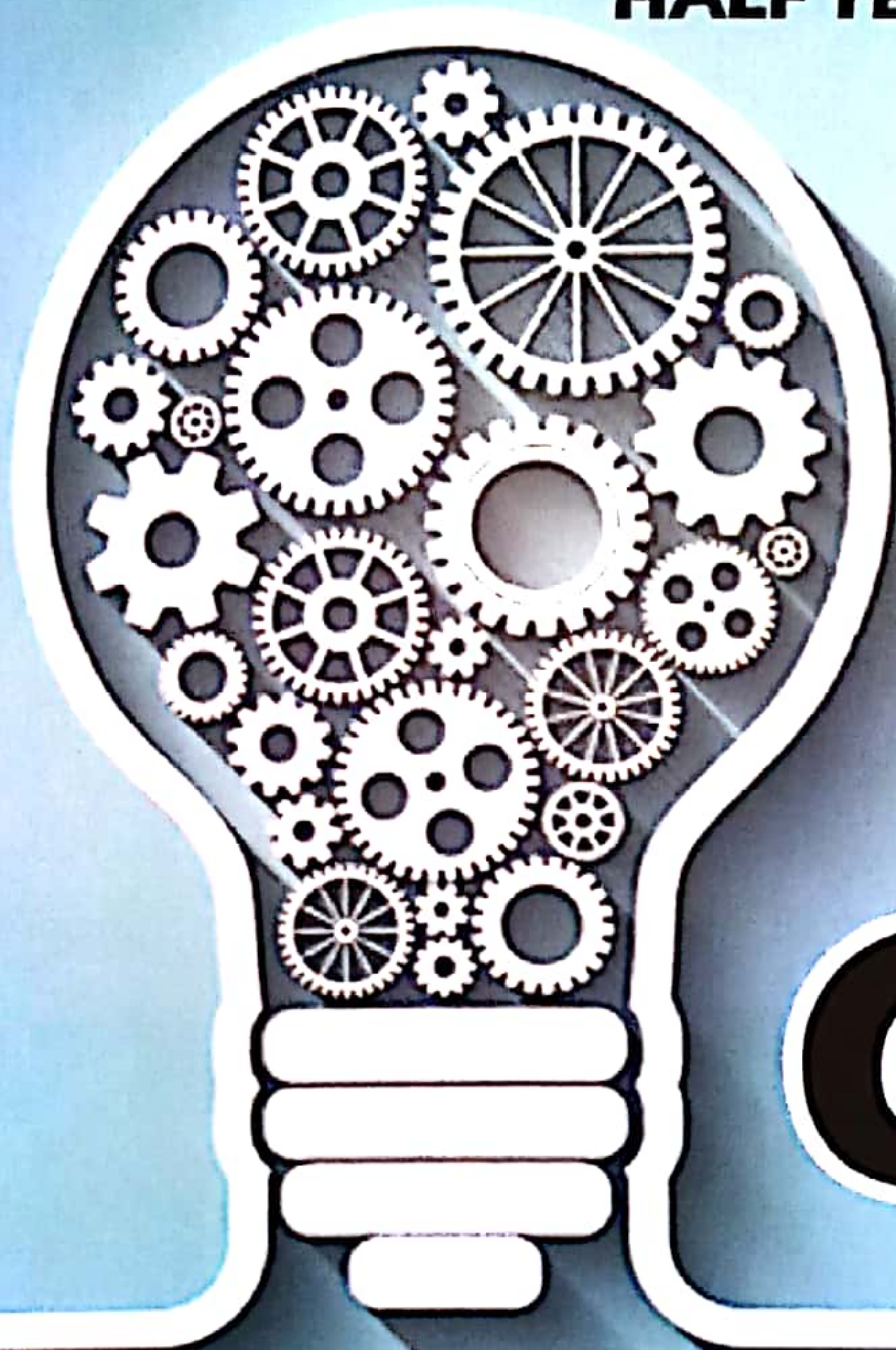




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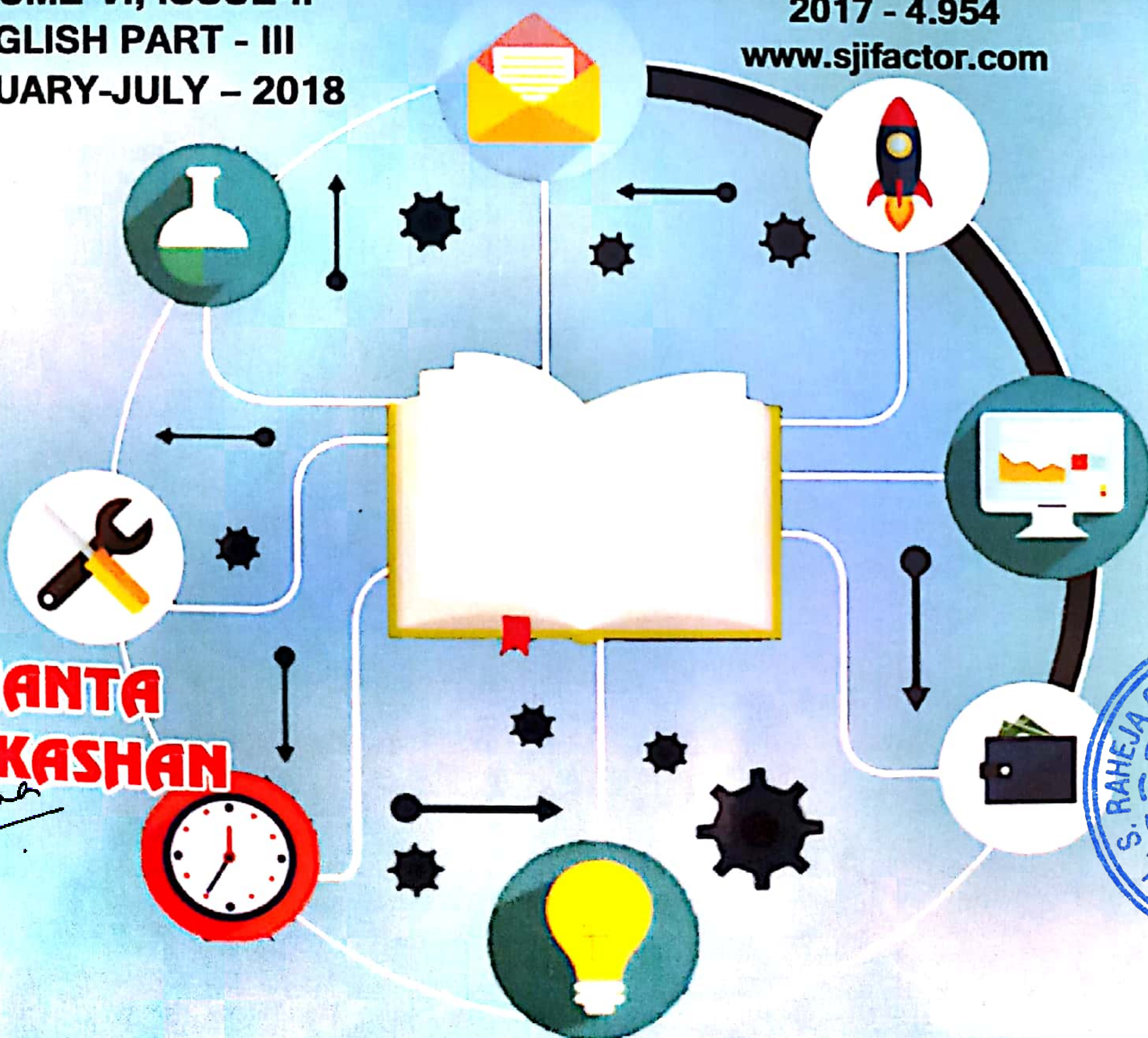
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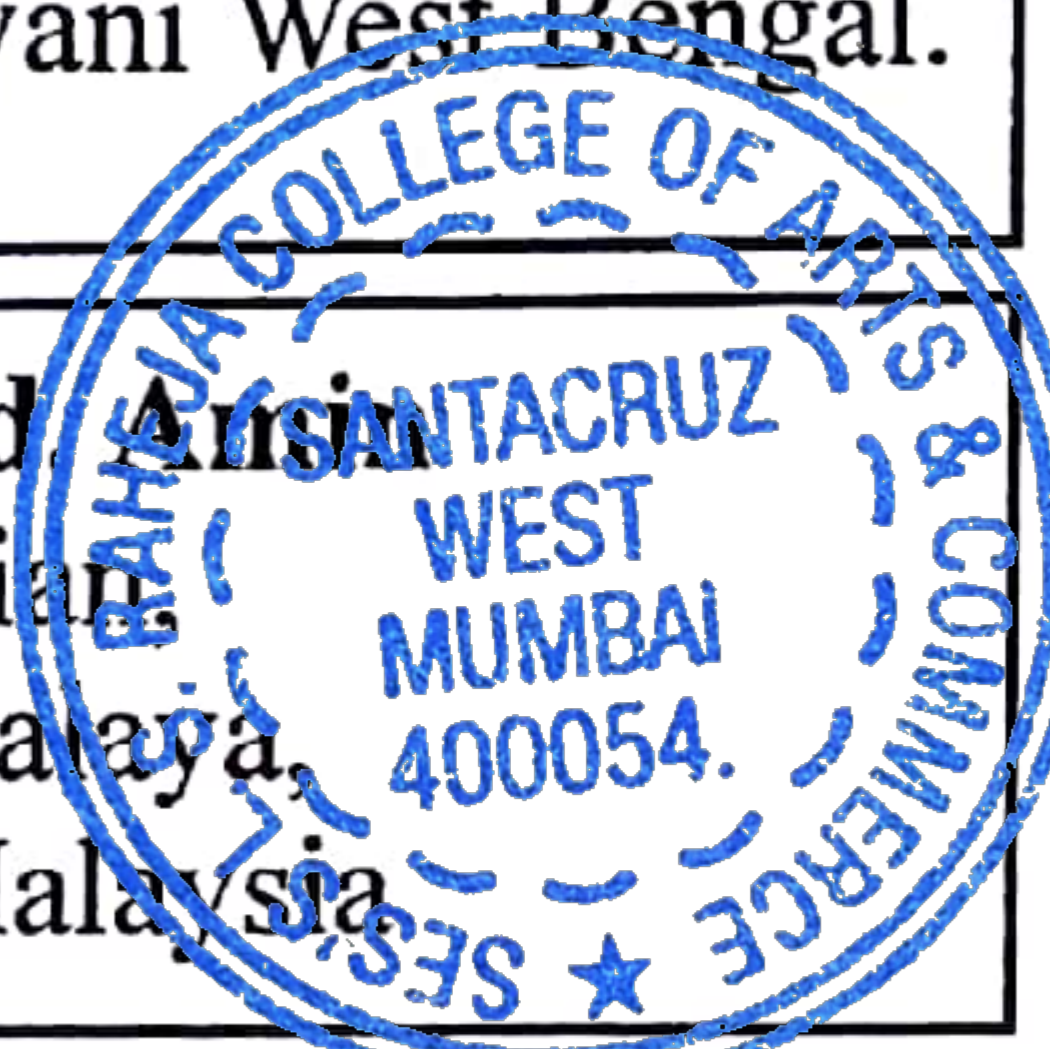
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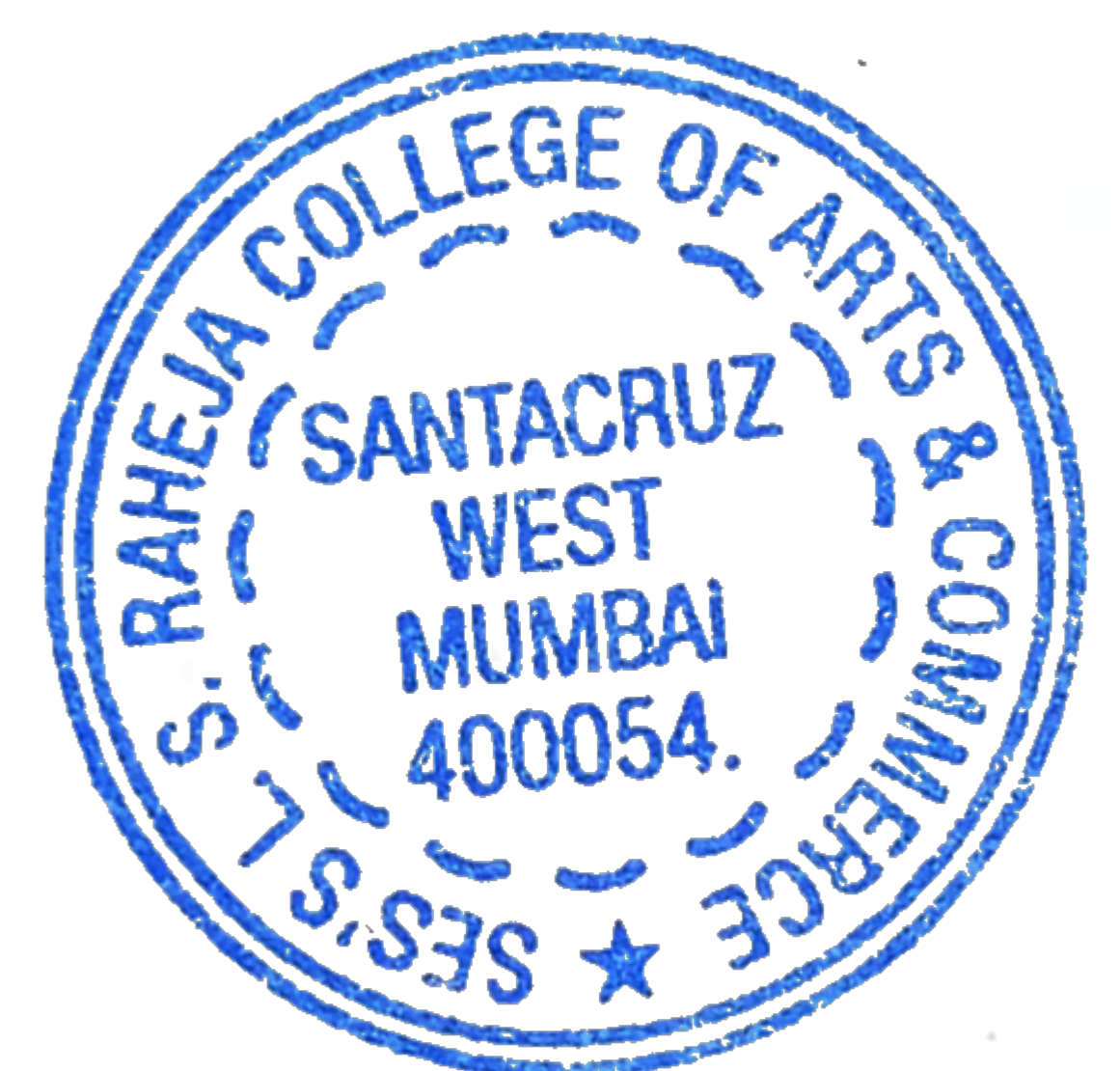
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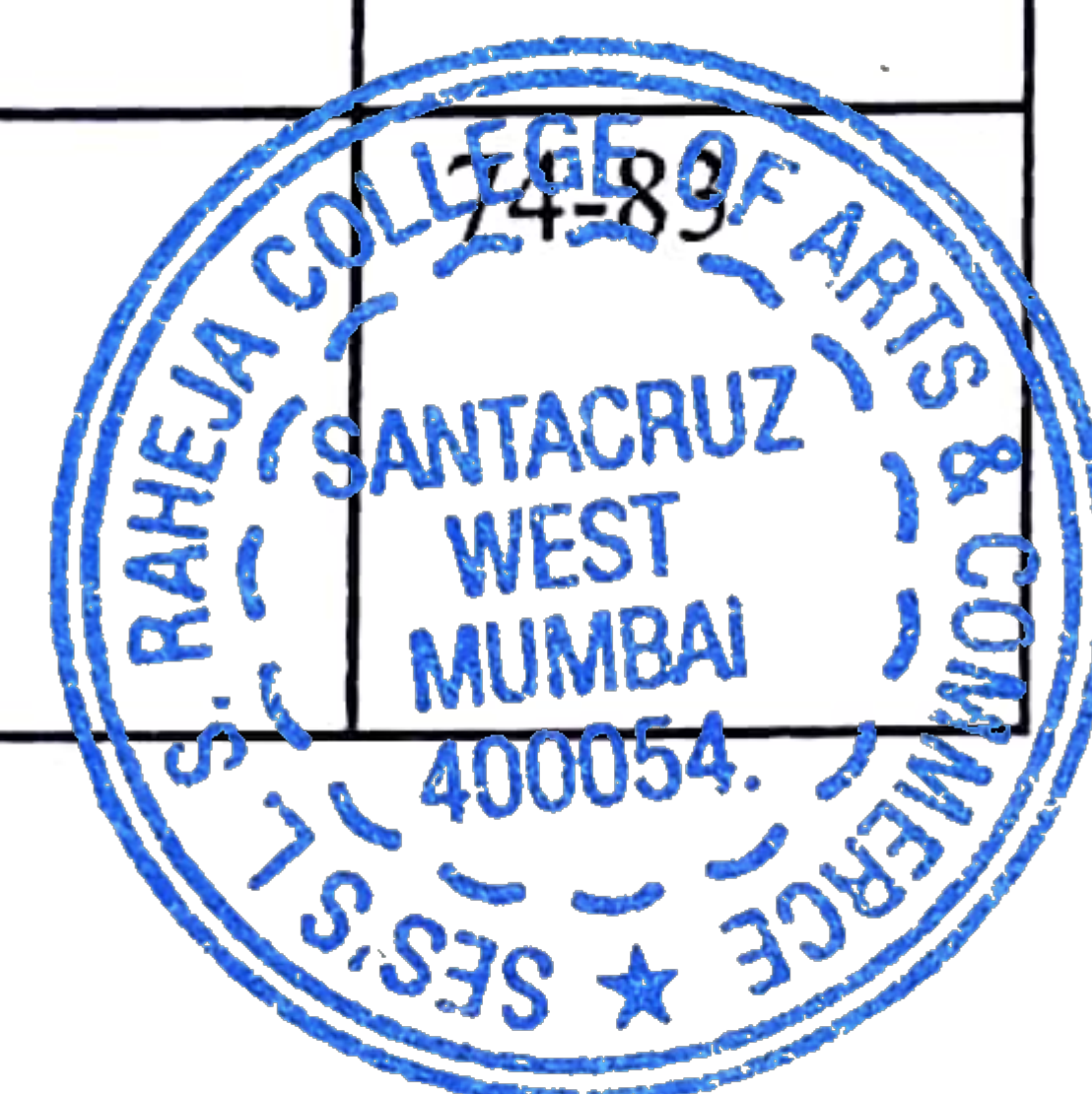


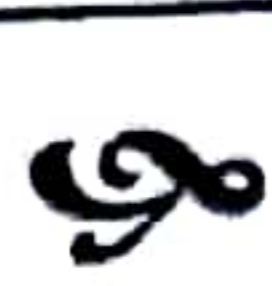


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1

Globalization and Employability: The Need for Quality Enhancement in Higher Education

Dr. Preeti Vaswani

Assistant Professor in English L.S. Raheja College of Arts and Commerce Mumbai.

Abstract

The twenty-first century has witnessed mammoth changes in various fields such as technology, education, communication, fashion, lifestyle, culture, etc. as a result of globalization. The communication revolution of recent times is closely associated with the unbelievable technological advancement of recent times. Man is changing, adapting himself to change, keeping pace with changing trends, only to prove that the only constant concept of life is change. In such a scenario, quality management in education is inescapably necessary. Students have to be trained par excellence to cope with the global competition in order to emerge successful, and be employable. Conventional methods of education can no longer work to improve student efficacy. Students can no longer be expected to learn things by heart, and become store-houses of information: the encyclopedia and the internet can be used for the purpose. The necessity of imbibing the functional aspect of education has now come to the fore. Courses such as Business Communication, Communication Skills, Personality Development, Functional English, English for Competitive Examinations are now replacing English Literature. With access to the internet, the world has become a global village, where communication has overcome physical barriers.

Technology and education have now become inseparable. The teacher is now expected to go a step further than just providing information, which can now be easily obtained from other sources. The teacher is required to mould students in the required fashion, give rich and varied interpretations of the written material, inculcate analytical and critical sensibility in the student, train him/her towards enhancing his/her skills, conduct workshops and practical sessions to improve students' confidence, practically train them in imbibing social etiquettes, strive to broaden their outlook, failing which, he/she would be replaced with computers.

The paper focuses on the need for teachers to be techno-savvy, prepare students for the competitive and changing job market, for culture shocks that may arise out of globalization, train

them to withstand work pressures and general stress, and develop in them people management, time management, etc., and inculcate in them, a balanced view of life. The paper also delves into the psychological aspects associated with changing trends in the world, and the role of education in preparing young students for the same. The paper also explores the practical techniques that can be employed to enhance quality in education, and guidelines for the instructor to achieve the same. The paper would be useful to academicians, research scholars, historians, sociologists, psychologists, and students too.

Keywords: globalization, employability, technology, quality enhancement, education

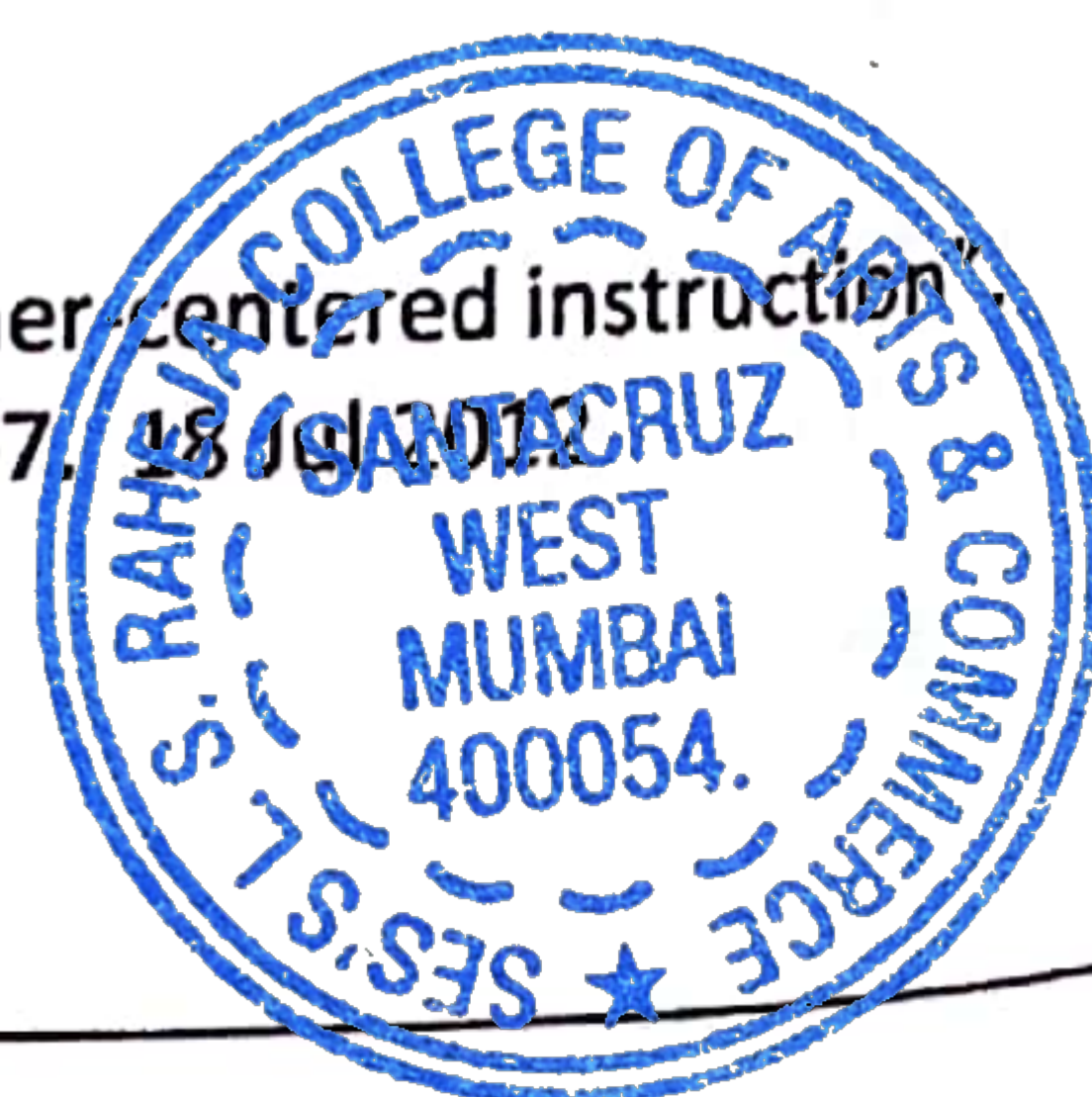
Full Paper

Learning is an on-going process in one's life. But formal education needs to be directed to achieve a particular objective. The emphasis on systematization in education to improve its functionality has been widely realized in recent times. The approach, therefore, has now shifted from a teacher-centric to a learner-centric mode of education. The following table shows the difference between both the types:

Teacher vs. Learner-Centered Instruction¹

Teacher-Centered	Learner-Centered
Focus is on instructor	Focus is on both students and instructor
Focus is on language forms and structures (what the instructor knows about the language)	Focus is on language use in typical situations (how students will use the language)
Instructor talks; students listen	Instructor models; students interact with instructor and one another
Students work alone	Students work in pairs, in groups, or alone depending on the purpose of the activity
Instructor monitors and corrects every student utterance	Students talk without constant instructor monitoring; instructor provides feedback/correction when questions arise

¹ "The essentials of language teaching – Comparison of Learner-centered and teacher centered instruction" National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC). (n.d.). Retrieved April 23, 2007. <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/goalsmethods/learncentpop.html>



Instructor answers students' questions about language	Students answer each other's questions, using instructor as an information resource
Instructor chooses topics	Students have some choice of topics
Instructor evaluates student learning	Students evaluate their own learning; instructor also evaluates
Classroom is quiet	Classroom is often noisy and busy

As Dr. Phyllis Blumberg points out, a teacher-centred approach to instruction often generates passive learners who do not take responsibility for their own learning, while a learner-centred approach leads to increased motivation for learning and thereby, better grades. The teacher's role should be facilitative rather than didactic. He lists six components for The Responsibility for Learning.²

1. Responsibility for learning.
2. Learning to learn skills or skills for future learning (including time management, self-monitoring, and goal setting).
3. Self-directed, lifelong learning skills (including determining a personal need to know more, knowing who to ask or where to look for information, determining when need is met).
4. Students' self-assessment of their learning.
5. Students' self-assessment of their strengths and weaknesses.
6. Information literacy skills (framing questions, accessing and evaluating sources, evaluating content, using information legally) [<http://www.acrl.org>]

The teacher's task now includes, but is not limited to, training students to think logically, analytically, critically, while employing a multi-dimensional approach. The teacher is now no longer a mere instructor, but a performer like a stage artist to keep the students captivated.

² Phyllis Blumberg, Ph.D. "Learner-Centered Teaching". University of the Sciences. 2011. 18 Jul 2012 <<http://www.usciences.edu/teaching/learner-centered/>>



The mode of assessing students too needs to be changed to suit the modern times and the soaring competition. Activities for assessment could involve group-discussions, case studies, power-point / oral presentations, debates, class quiz, group projects / individual projects, with the assessment parameters comprising innovation, content, presentation, relevance, and dimensionality. Group activities involve sharing of knowledge and learning from peers facilitating students to learn faster and with greater interest. But this can also have a negative consequence. Some of the students in the group end up working more than the others. Claire Davis and Elizabeth Wilcock in their article *Teaching Materials Using Case Studies* write that Group working may not be suited to all students. While most students recognize its importance for developing key skills, many comment on the uneven workload within their groups. The comments of students collected by the authors included:

'It's not fair when other members of the group do not provide any input or aid the group effort yet still get marks...'

'I don't like working as part of a team because there are always lazy people who don't do any work and if you don't want that to affect your own mark you end up doing everything. I work well in a team and am quite a good organizer, but tend to do too much of the work.'

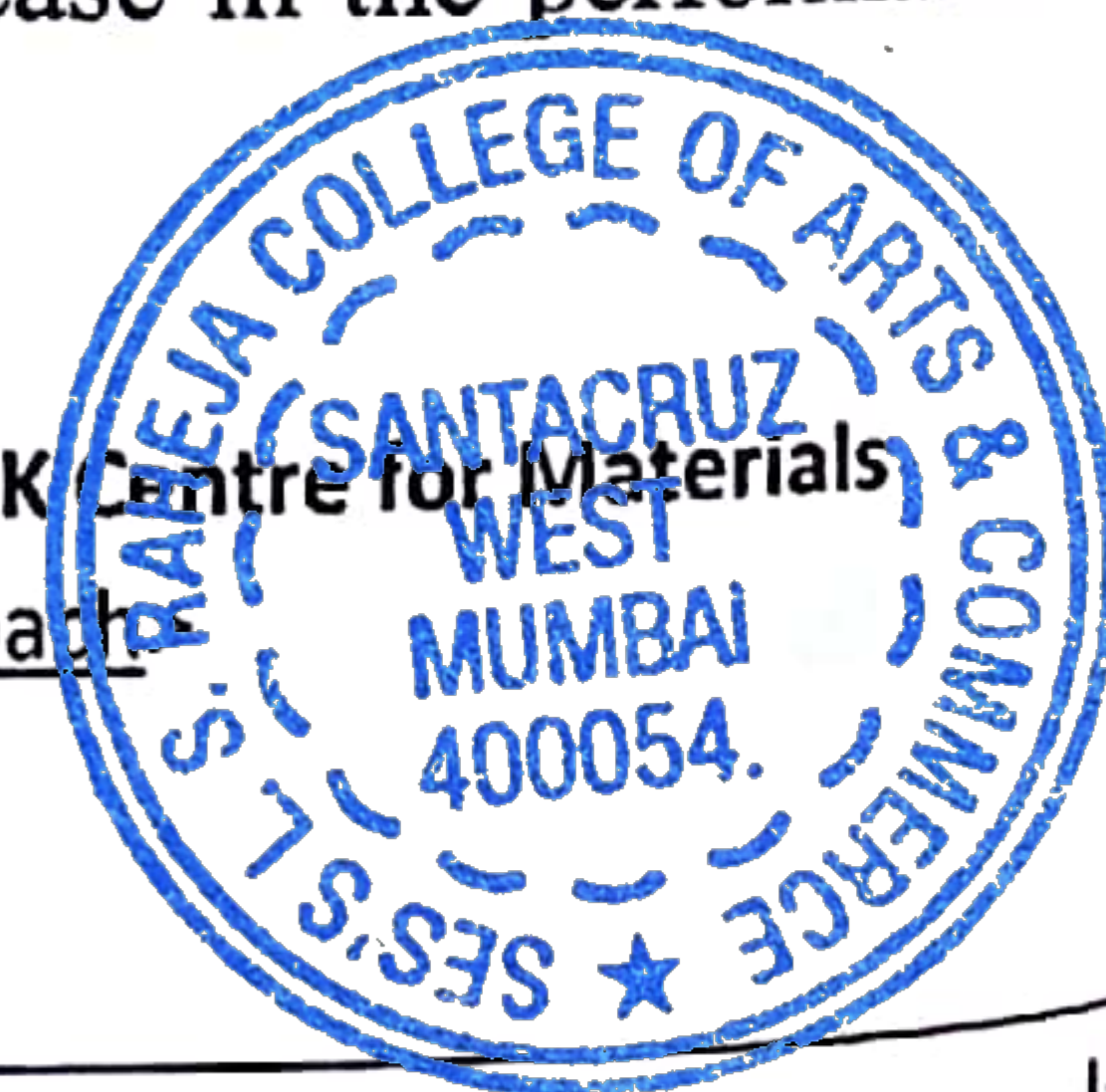
The issue was tackled by them by piloting formal group sessions with the lecturer in one of their case studies. This helped solve the issue to a great extent. The positive comments made included:

'They (the group sessions) enabled the group to set specific targets and identify the roles of each individual'

'A good way of motivating people to actually do some work and not to leave it to the last minute!'³

Understanding student psychology contributes greatly towards helping students fare better than otherwise. Praising students in class for their participation and achievements acts as a motivating factor that helps students learn better. On the other hand, absence of such "reinforcement" results in a sort of "unlearning" or at least in a decrease in the performance of

³ Davis, Claire and Elizabeth Wilcock. "Teaching Materials Using Case Studies". UK Centre for Materials Education. 18 Jul 2012 < <http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp#approach>



the students.⁴ As Kelvin Seifert and Rosemary Sutton put it, students who hold achievement goals can be of three types. They discuss these types through a case study of three individuals Maria, Sara, and Lindsay, who are taking algebra together.

Maria's main concern is to learn the material as well as possible because she finds it interesting and because she believes it will be useful to her in later courses, perhaps at university. Hers is a mastery goal because she wants primarily to learn or master the material. Sara, however, is concerned less about algebra than about getting top marks on the exams and in the course. Hers is a performance goal because she is focused primarily on looking successful; learning algebra is merely a vehicle for performing well in the eyes of peers and teachers. Lindsay, for her part, is primarily concerned about avoiding a poor or failing mark. Hers is a performance avoidance goal or failure-avoidance goal because she is not really as concerned about learning algebra, as Maria is, or about competitive success, as Sara is; she is simply intending to avoid failure.⁵

But these goals are often experienced not in their pure form, but in combinations. The authors go on to explain that mastery goals are a form of intrinsic motivation, performance goals imply extrinsic motivation, and failure-avoidance goals are often a negative by-product of competitiveness of performance goals. Teachers are required to focus on students' individual effort and improvement as much as possible, rather than on comparing students' successes to each other. They have to draw on and encourage students' interest as much as possible so that they reap the benefits of mastery in the subject. Kelvin Seifert and Rosemary Sutton also go on to add that teachers should also provide appropriate conditions for students to learn. First, academic tasks and materials actually have to be at about the right level of difficulty. Second, teachers also need to be ready to give help to individuals who need it—even if they believe that an assignment is easy enough or clear enough that students should not need individual help. Third, teachers need to remember that ability—usually considered a relatively stable factor—often actually changes incrementally over the long term.

Kelvin Seifert and Rosemary Sutton lay down five ways to encourage students:

1. Set goals with students, and get a commitment from them to reach the goals.

⁴ Seifert, Kelvin and Rosemary Sutton. Educational Psychology. 2nd ed. E-Books directory. 2009. 17 Jul 2012. <www.ebooksdiretory.com>

⁵ Ibid.



2. Encourage students to compare their performance with their own previous performance, not with other students.
3. Point out links between effort and improvement.
4. In giving feedback about performance, focus on information, not evaluative judgments.
5. Point out that increases in knowledge or skill happen gradually by sustained effort, not because of inborn ability.

In conclusion, employing such practical techniques in education can enhance its quality resulting in greater responsibility on the part of the student thereby gearing him / her up to become employable and competent. It also results in job satisfaction for teachers at having contributed in producing well-educated, cultured, academically and emotionally sound individuals who are prepared to face not only the global competition, but also life as well.

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