

## THE OPINION OF TEACHERS ABOUT THE USE OF ROTE MEMORIZATION IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

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“Memory is not wisdom; idiots can by rote repeat volumes. Yet what is wisdom without memory?” -Martin Farquhar Tupper India has got quite a varied educational heritage. The oldest system of education in India is the Gurukul system. This system was rich in its approach to education. The Gurus aimed at an overall development of an individual i.e. development as a human being, a social being, spiritual development and professional development. The methods of teaching were skill- based methods like experiential methods, natural learning methods and practical learning methods. Rote memorization was only used to remember and pass on the knowledge to the next generation as there were no books to preserve the knowledge in written form. Gradually with the Mughal rule, British rule, this system became scarce. During British rule the teaching became teacher centered and because of the unfamiliar foreign language English, students had to rote memorize the knowledge. The focus of study shifted from acquisition of knowledge to passing the exam. Thus rote memorization became the most prevalent method in Pre-Independent India. But as we can see the modern education system, in the last decades, there has been a paradigm shift. Education has become learner centered and focus is on understanding the concept rather than just memorizing it. Constructivism and active learning has replaced rote memorization. The educators now consciously make lesser and lesser use of rote memorization.

Rote memorization is nothing but the repetition of the subject matter to be remembered verbatim and for a longer time. The learner needs to remember many things, so that they can be retrieved quickly without giving it much

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of a thought.. The common examples are the multiplication tables, squares and square roots, periodic table, certain formulae, lists, dates, names and the list is endless. Some facts need not to be understood to be remembered, for example the dates of certain events, like historical events or the events in a person’s life. These events can be remembered with their dates by rote memorization. Most of the time it is necessary to understand things. But even after understanding it takes more time to retrieve the information if it is not memorized, for e.g. Definitions, the statements of different laws, certain formulae, theorems, lists etc. For a quicker retrieval, rote memorization is necessary.

The researcher , through this study, wants to know whether the technique of rote memorization is still relevant and can be used in the teaching learning process. Is the method necessary as well as effective to enhance the learning of the learner?

### **Need and importance of the study:**

There has been a lot of research on the effectiveness of rote memorization, retention in long term memory, comparison of remote memorization with active learning or meaningful learning, rote memorization in context with neuroscience and cognitive processes. But the researcher felt the need to study how one of the most important stakeholders of the education system, the teacher, feels about rote memorization. Being the first one to have first hand experience with the different teaching methods on ground level, the teacher's opinion about any teaching method is the most important.

It is very important to know a teacher's opinion about rote memorization because this opinion influences the classroom transactions and pedagogical strategies. Eventually this also will influence the curriculum of teacher education. Teachers' opinions will certainly direct the school curriculum. Student engagement levels can be decided on the basis of teachers' opinions. This research will help to strike a balance between traditional and modern methods. It will also help in achieving desirable learning outcomes. If the teachers feel that both rote memorization and active learning can be used in combination this will help in achieving the desired learning outcomes. This all eventually will influence educational policies

### **Statement of the problem:**

The opinion of teachers about the use of rote memorization in the teaching- learning process.

### **Aim of the study:**

1.To find out the opinions of the teachers towards rote memorization in the teaching learning process.

### **Objectives:**

1. To find out the readiness of teachers to use rote memorization in the teaching learning process.
2. To find out the justifications of their opinions.
3. To analyze the percentage of teachers who are in favor of rote memorization.

### **Research Methodology:**

A survey method was used for this research because the study aims to find the opinions of the teachers towards rote memorization.

### **Sampling:**

In the present study the researcher used purposive sampling. 41 teachers of Rahul International School both primary and secondary teachers were surveyed.

### **Tools and Techniques for Data Collection:**

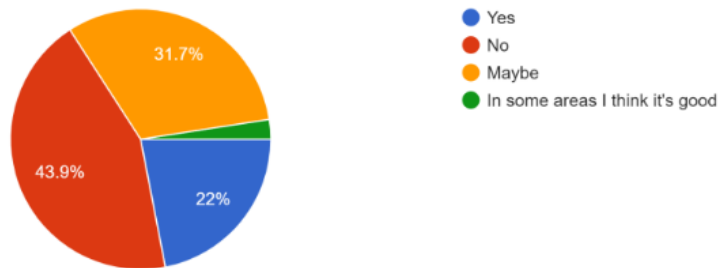
A questionnaire was prepared by the researcher to find out the opinion of teachers about the use of rote memorization as a technique. The percentage was analyzed.

### **Data Collection:**

Data was collected from 41 primary and secondary teachers of Rahul International School.

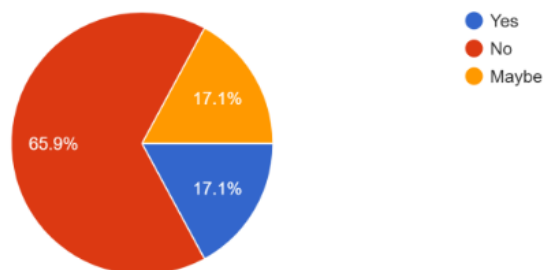
**Analysis of the responses to find out the opinion of teachers about the use of rote memorization in the teaching- learning process.**

Do you favour rote memorization?  
41 responses



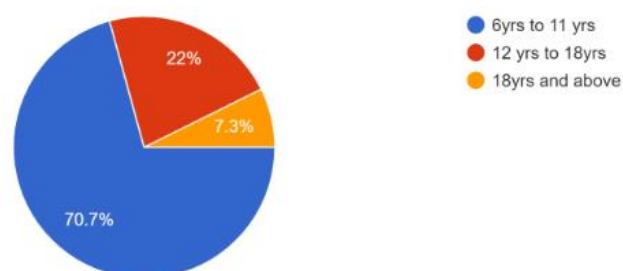
From the above pie-chart, it can be concluded that a majority of teachers i.e. 43.9% are not in favor of rote memorization while only 22% teachers are in favor of rote memorization. Whereas a big percentage i.e.31% of teachers are not sure about the use of rote memorization.

Is it ok to rule out rote memorization completely ?  
41 responses



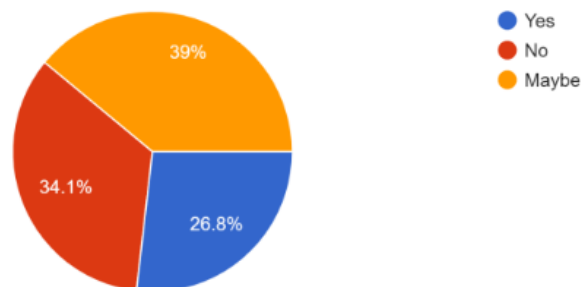
Contrary to the responses to the previous question, 65.9% teachers think that rote memorization should not be completely ruled out from the teaching learning process. This may be because they realize that some areas of learning require rote memorization.

Which age group is ideal for rote memorization?  
41 responses



Maximum teachers i.e.70.7% teachers think that 6ys to 11yrs i.e. early childhood is ideal for rote memorization.

Do you think that rote memorization makes students more efficient?  
41 responses



Teachers gave a mixed response to this question. Only 26% of teachers thought that rote memorization makes students more efficient, while 34.1% thought the opposite.

#### Findings and discussion:

The present study aims at finding out the opinions of teachers about the use of rote memorization in the teaching-learning process and following were the findings through the study:

1. From the statistical analysis of the data it could be concluded that a majority of teachers were against the use of rote memorization in the teaching learning process because of the paradigm shift and an increasing popularity of the learner centered methods. Those who were in favor thought that rote memorization is required for learning certain things like facts, dates, tables, etc.
2. When asked, in which areas students need to do rote memorization, most likely answers were- tables, theorems, facts, formulae etc.
3. Even though the majority of teachers were not in favor of rote memorization, an outstanding number of teachers still thought that rote memorization can not be completely ruled out from the process. This may be because they still think that there are times and areas where rote memorization is relevant and necessary.
4. It can also be concluded that early childhood is the most suitable age to use rote memorization. As this age is characterized by lower order thinking, the concepts can be remembered rather than understood.

#### Conclusion:

It was seen that because of the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered education, teachers think that rote memorization would kill the creativity in children and hence they were not in its favor. Although the researcher thinks that rote memorization holds its own place in the teaching learning process. Teachers have to be educated regarding the appropriate use of this technique. Rote memorization can effectively be used as a complementary technique with all the other learner centered teaching-learning methods. A nice blend of learner-centered methods and rote memorization will surely help students not only to learn and retain better but also use and apply the learning effectively in real life situations.

This study was limited to Rahul International School. The researcher would like to suggest a research on state board school teachers to have a comprehensive outcome.

The researcher would also like to suggest a study of the effect of rote memorization on the efficiency of cognitive abilities of the learners.

As suggested above, the rote memorization method can be blended with other methods for effective learning, the researcher suggests an experimental research on developing some combination strategies to be used in the classroom.

The present study has found out the opinions of teachers about rote learning. Further studies can be conducted to find out about the perspectives of students, curriculum developers, educators and parents separately.

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Why rote memorization still matters & how to do it right

#### *Cite This Article:*

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