

Effectiveness of Audio Visual Aids in English Language Learning

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Abstract

In this modern era, it is a noticing fact that there are appreciable drastic changes in the field of education due to the far-reaching development of the technology. The integration and incorporation of pertinent technology will surely enhance the English Language learning largely as it opens innovative horizon. Especially Audio Visual aids play an essential role in elevating the English Language Learning skill of the students of the elementary level. But, it is a fact that, even though audio-visual aids like “Companion CD” which contains encouraging activities, enriching slide shows and language games, pictures, audio clips, videos, posters altogether provide an amusing learning atmosphere and effective learning experience to the students, many fail to understand the effectiveness to incorporate it into language classrooms. Therefore, this research will look into the effectiveness and influence of audio-visual aids in English language learning by analysing the responses of the students of the elementary level using five-point Likert scale questionnaire.

Keywords: Audio visual aids, English language learning, technology, multimedia, teaching methods.

The importance of English language and the number of English speakers are increasing tremendously day by day. It is amusing that many spend lots of their time to acquire mastery over different languages especially English. English has become more prominent because of various reasons. Mainly because it is known as the universal language and global language. It also functions as a link language and it has been used as the official language in many spheres. English has created a better understanding among the people of the world and has broken the barriers of the nations and brought the people into a better interdependence. It is one of the six official languages of the UNO. So it functions as a window that unlocks the world of opportunities and expands the mind of new ideas. Moreover, in this highly technological modern digital Era, English is the language of technology. Because of all these factors, it is relevant to analyse the method in which English Language acquisition takes place in general.

The technology has not only widened the scope of English language enormously but also plays a vital role in making the English language learning at ease. The prominent role of multimedia is highly noticeable and appreciable in the level of language acquisition. It is remarkable that many educational sectors have considered the importance of incorporating the multimedia, specifically the Audio visual aids into the educational systems to some extent. In spite of all these, many students still remain underprivileged without having enough access to these fascinating opportunities majorly because of the lack of understanding

on the effectiveness of audio-visual aids. In this scenario, it is high time to make the world aware of these ample opportunities that pave the way to the new horizons.

This research evaluates the influence of audio-visual aids to make the English language learning effective and interesting by analysing the responses of students. The experiment and study were conducted on elementary level students. The selection of elementary level was mainly because it is the foundational stage in which each student is introduced to formal education. The data has been collected from students of elementary level of Assisi CBSE School, Bangalore by using the questionnaire which contained statements regarding the influence of audio-visual aids, just after a demo class using the audio-visual aids (Companion CD).

According to Gandhi, “The education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of bodily organs –hands, feet, eyes, ears and nose. The National Policy of Education,1986 and as modified in 1922 has laid a great stress on the use of teaching aids, especially improvised aids, to make the teaching and learning more effective and realistic.”

(Mannan Bagulia 108).

“Audio visual aids are devices that facilitate the teacher to establish, co-relate, coordinate accurate concepts, interpretations and enable the learner to make learning more concrete, effective, interesting, inspirational, meaningful and vivid” (Mannan Bagulia 108).

The various studies conducted in the field of education and different online courses affirms that Audio visual aids are extremely helpful to the education scenario. Proper incorporation of the study materials which go along with the content will be a good exposure and interesting affair to the students of all categories. In a very special way, even the proper manifestation of simple teaching aids usually create a lot more enthusiasm among the students. As technology tries to make the life of the people easier, the use of audio-visual aids undoubtedly makes the lives of the students better. The selection of the material therefore becomes an essential aspect of teaching methodology. The various combinations of the apt instruction materials should make a proper sense and should accomplish the purpose of aimed course plan.

Many instructors fail to understand the effectiveness and importance of audio visual aids and also fails to incorporate it because of many reasons. Many at times, the teachers feel that it is a too troublesome job to search and find out the apt materials which will fulfil the essential teaching objectives. And some are not well trained to make use of the audio-visual aids in an easy manner. And some educational institutions do not have the proper equipment and atmosphere to inculcate it. Taking care of all these aspects the education visionaries have to take radical steps to eradicate the limitations and hindering factors to make learning an enriching aspect to the students at different levels.

Behavioural Theory which was proposed by J B Watson well proposes the idea of stimulus-response is very applicable with regard to language learning too. The classical followers of this theory, Pavlov who proposed the classical conditioning, BF Skinner who proposed the operant conditioning and finally E L Thorndike who proposed Law of effect, Law of exercise and Law of readiness also well substantiate the same idea. Very particularly, the Law of the effect comes more in line with this. According to this theory, if the learning experience is in a pleasant atmosphere, the learning will be faster and concrete.

Content Analysis

“Companion CD” as a unique and perfect audio-visual teaching aid: The “Companion CD” which has been designed according to the content and expected subject matter provides a better opportunity to make the learning a new experience. As per the concern of the teacher, it is a great relief to them as it has been well designed to cater the learning objectives. Since this audio-visual aid comprised of different technical features, it creates interest among the students. The “Companion CD” which has been designed for different age groups and classes consist of the variety of language games, vocabulary exercises, study skills, grammar aspects and references from the literature. Since, it is a combination of pictures, audio clips, videos, powerpoint slides, posters and so on in language classrooms, it is a unique design altogether.

Companion CD makes the learning enjoyable: The attitude of the students will be more favourable while dealing with these type of aids primarily because it gives them a feeling of dealing with a toy type material. It also provides a better ambience to build up the self-confidence as they are continuously boosted up with effective feedbacks. The pleasant atmosphere makes the learning enjoyable, interesting and innovative.

Through this audio visual aid learning catered to individual differences: The learning style and space differ always from one individual to the other. Each one will be endowed with special and different intellectual capacity. Because of this same reason, this method of teaching provides a better platform to each student for grasping the content in their own preferred different ways.

It makes learning directed towards specific objectives and language skills: The selection of suitable audio-visual aid is never an easy job. It contains a lot of filtering because untimely and unplanned audio-visual aids may well create an adversary effect on the students. In this situation, these types of well-organized audio-visual aids can properly focus on the learning objectives. Apart from this, it provides a very good platform to the students to improve the language skills as it provides better inputs and suitable activities.

Learning is retained better with this learning aid: It is the popular fact that the aspects and matters which we saw, heard and involved in, will remain in our memory for a quality period of time than the aspects that we had only see or hear. This sort of learning aids creates an atmosphere by which more than one sense organ can actively take part in the learning process as they hear, see and do various activities simultaneously.

It brings out creativity and freedom: Audio-visual aids bring an end to the traditional ‘chalk – talk’ method. It brings out the variety of creative which they become the centre of learning activity. The traditional way of teacher centred method paves the way for a constructive method in which both the teacher and the students are equally important. This can also provide a better chance of self-learning in the absence of the teacher to some extent.

Tremendously it attracts the attention: The Proper attention of the students is an inevitable factor to make it possible any learning process. To attain the attention of the students these sort of audio-visual aids are extremely helpful. And it also plays a vital role in sustaining the attention of the students to a larger extent. It provides the wonderful

opportunity of better learning experience to the students. And interestingly students come to the level that they listen for themselves without many external factors.

It creates a realistic experience and saves time and energy: A good deal of time for both the teacher and students can be saved as these designed packs of audio-visual aids clarify each phenomenon in its possible best way. Moreover, these audio-visual aids which provide a realistic atmosphere of the learning matters help the students to associate the things better and improve their reasoning power.

It provides a unique chance of timely reinforcement that is each activity has been designed with adequate feedback and reinforcements according to the performance of the individual learner. It majorly provides the very well ground to understand the gradual growth of each individual and also provides the enriched atmosphere of positive feedback or directions to perform better.

The analysis of the retrieved data

To analyse the effectiveness of audio visual aids, the study was conducted as part of the research with 100 students from Assisi CBSE School, Bangalore. The participants were of different mother tongues (Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi....) as most of their parents are migrants due to various reasons. Students were briefed that their responses are meant for research purposes and not related to their evaluation process. Students were instructed to express their views frankly and impartially by responding to the ten questions formed on the five-point Likert scale which provides them five options which vary from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Students were encouraged to seek researcher's help whenever they found a given question difficult to understand. Data analysis of the students' questionnaire is presented with the findings below.

Students were given an interesting language game from the "Companion CD" to strengthen the understanding about the prefixes in an easy manner. The activity goes like this, in a beautiful animated background video of a pretty house and the guests from the house come out while it is raining heavily outside. The entire atmosphere has been well narrated in the video apart from the visual images like this;



Image: 1 (Companion CD)

“You are having a party at your house and when it got over, it started to rain heavily. Your guests need to leave and can’t stay back. You have five kinds of Umbrellas. But you cannot give them to your guests randomly. Each carries a hint with them. Look at the hint and the umbrellas. The umbrella goes with the hint your guest carries will be the perfect umbrella.” (Language game from the Pathways Companion CD 6)

This particular activity can provide a beautiful learning experience to the students of elementary level as mentioned in the behavioural theory, as it creates a big amount of interest and enthusiasm among the students. It also provides a playful method through which they learn and understand the concept very easily.

This activity also paves the way to improve their listening skill and gives an exposure to the correct pronunciation since the activity is accompanied by audio narration. Apart from these, the students were encouraged by suitable and encouraging responses when they were able to do it right. And also this motivates them to correct themselves through two more chances in case of a wrong attempt. It helps the students to improve their cognitive skills and learn new things by doing various activities.

The response of the students for the statements 1 & 4 from the questionnaire gives an evidence for it.

Statement 1. I prefer English classes with Audio-visual aids like videos, images etc.

Strongly agree [85], Agree [15], Undecided [0], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

As per the responses received from the students, 85% students strongly preferred English classes with different audio visual aids. Apart from this, 15% of the students again affirm it as they have responded with agreeing on option for the same. There is no disagreement mentioned in this matter too.

Statement 4. The language game from the CD was very interesting and informative.

Strongly agree [90], Agree [10], Undecided [0], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

This is a fascinating factor which has attained a maximum number of great positive responses as 90% of the students favourably agree upon the fact that the language game from the “Companion CD” was very interesting and informative. And simultaneously 10% of the students uphold this factor by agreeing upon.

So, this clearly highlights the fact the students of this digital era prefer classes with the audio-visual aids rather than the old traditional verbal method. Again, it is well noticeable that, not only science streamed subjects, but English language learning also has a lot of multimedia influence in the past few years.

As Howard Altman has pointed out, “If theory without practice is futile and then practice without theory is fatal” (Bowers 394). It has explicitly demanded the need of inculcating the new technological aids along with the traditional teaching strategy to make the teaching and learning more interesting and effective.

Another activity also goes line with these ideas. The activity from the companion CD goes like this,

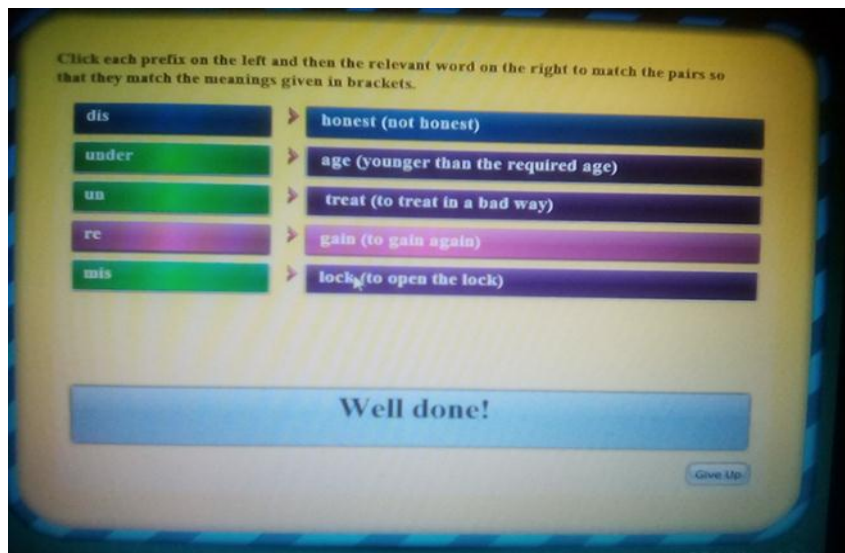


Image: 2 (Companion CD)

Click each prefix on the left and then the relevant words on the right which has been given in different colours of boxes to match the pairs so that they match the meanings given in the opposite columns. This vocabulary activity was also well encouraged by the responses like ‘Well done Continue!’

And when the student was confused or out of the way, it gives the motivation and encouragement like, ‘Would you like to continue? Seems that you are confused – The correct matches are displayed on the screen.’ and so on. This activity creates a lot of interest and gives motivation to the students even when they are stuck in confusion.

The responses to the statements 2 and 5 by the students give good support to it.

Statement 2. The animated presentations made me very alert in the class.

Strongly agree [80], Agree [15], Undecided [5], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

80% of the entire students stand by the idea that the animated powerpoint presentations from the “Companion CD” are very helpful to make them alert and very active in the class. And 15% of the students are partially going along with the same idea in which only 0.5% of entire students are confused or undecided on this aspect.

Statement 5. The activities made me more involved in the session.

Strongly agree [85], Agree [15], Undecided [0], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

This statement also has got maximum good responses as 85% of the students were well motivated by the activities and 15% of the students also likely have the same the opinion supporting the activities. Activities and language games are the most exciting things for the children as it provides a feeling of a playful method but at the same time does not deviate from the purpose.

“Nowadays, the stereotyped traditional teaching methods and environment are unpopular while multimedia technology featuring audio, visual animation effects naturally and humanely makes us more access to information. Besides, with such characteristics as abundant-information and crossing time and space, multimedia technology offers a sense of reality and functions very well, which greatly cultivates students’ interest and motivation in the study and their involvement in class activities.” (Shyamlee 151)

Another narration is given in this “Companion CD” also plays a vital role to clarify the vivid concepts.



Image: 3 (Companion CD)

This particular description is all about the Chipko movement which was primarily a forest conservation movement in India that began in 1973 which organized resistance to the destruction of forests. Even though the event has taken place in the past, around forty-three years back in the history, the real images of poor, rural women in the hills of northern India standing with their arms around trees at the moment of even great threat and accompanied description from the witnesses make the students to feel the real pulse of that important event

and also improves their imaginative power apart from giving a social responsibility to become eco-friendly and humane.

The responses of the students for the statements 3, 10 give us a credible opinion regarding this aspect.

Statement 3. The videos used for teaching were very apt to convey the concept.

Strongly agree [75], Agree [15], Undecided [0], Disagree [10], Strongly disagree [0]

The selection of suitable audio-visual aids is the most important aspect in order to incorporate such methods into the teaching process. 75% of the students are having a positive outlook on the best selection of the audio visual aid which has been presented. 15% of the students again show their solidarity to the aspect by agreeing upon. Interestingly 10% of the entire students are of the opinion that the videos do not serve the purpose well. It explicitly reminds us about the prominence of the apt selection of videos which can fulfil the learning objectives.

Statement 10. I understood the concepts clearly within a shorter period of time.

Strongly agree [75], Agree [25], Undecided [0], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

Just like the previous response, this statement also has received a good response as 75% of the students were strongly agreeing upon and rest of the 25% of the students also has expressed their affirmation with the fact.

“Audio-visual education is an expanded aspect of communication using all the modern mechanisms for the transmission of ideas and its horizon is constantly developing” (Selmeier 210). In the article ‘Fundamentals of English Language Teaching’, the author suggests that use of online resources in ELT will be exciting and motivate the students because these media can provide better opportunities. It also provides some implications for various teaching practices and variably highlights the importance of studying English as World language and a brief overview of teaching methodologies followed by discussions (Ketosis 202).

Another activity which helps the students to understand the syllables of each word has presented interestingly by the incorporation of animated presentation in the “Companion CD”.

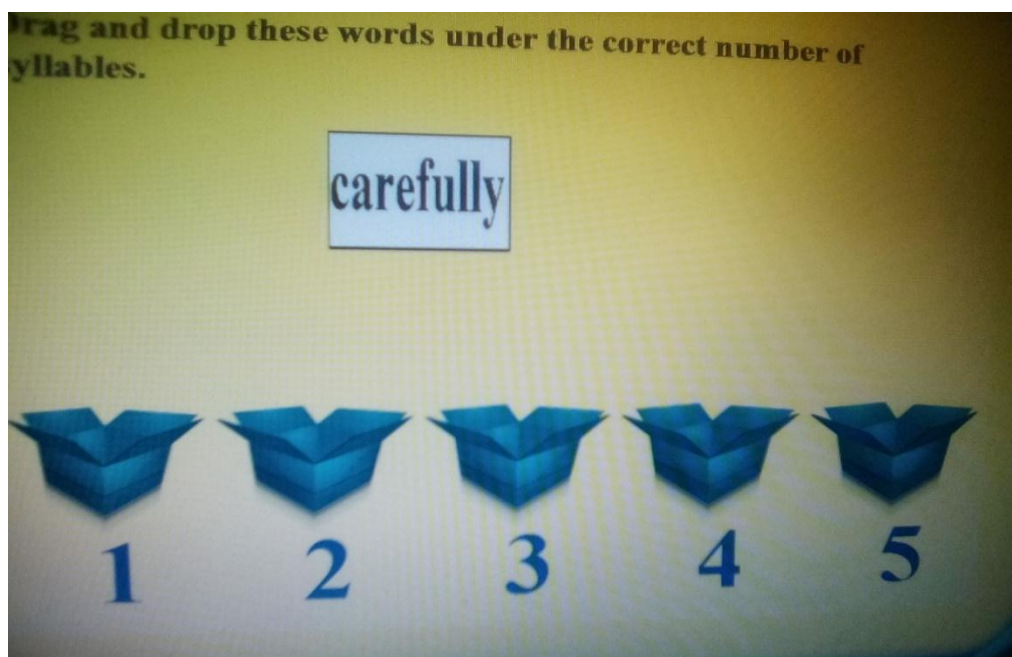


Image: 4 (Companion CD)

Here the student has to be quick enough to identify the syllables of each word which flash before their eyes. Each student is supposed to drag and drop each word according to the number of syllables to the open paper boxes which carry particular number. The student will be assessed according to the maximum number of correct responses. To have the accuracy, the number of words given and the number of chances used by the student will be displayed. During the activity as the words move in flash seconds from one corner and disappear, it motivates the students to be alert not to lose his/her chance to rectify the attempt anyway. Interestingly, the word will not be folded and dropped in case of the wrong attempt by the student.

The responses given by the students for statement 6 and 8 affirm it well.

Statement 6. I did not feel bored because of the changing images.

Strongly agree [85], Agree [15], Undecided [0], Disagree [0], Strongly disagree [0]

It is a real fact in the case of the modern children who are very much exposed to the technological invasion. As today's children are very much taken up by the different video games which demand quick and intelligent response, this activity caters the needs of the children greatly. It may be the reason for 85 % of students strongly agree for the following statement-6: 'I did not feel bored because of the changing images.' And apart from this, the rest of the students, that means the 15 % of students also agree on this fact.

Statement 8. I was encouraged to learn more as I received feedback immediately after each activity.

Strongly agree [50], Agree [30], Undecided [0], Disagree [15], Strongly disagree [5]

The theories proposed by EL Thorndike- Law of effect, Law of exercise, Law of readiness have suggested the importance of proper learning atmosphere, the importance of

repeated practice, and influence of proper learning experience. The audio visual aids provide the opportunity to the students to explore the real-life situations in an effective way. It assists them to be more realistic and imaginative at the same time.

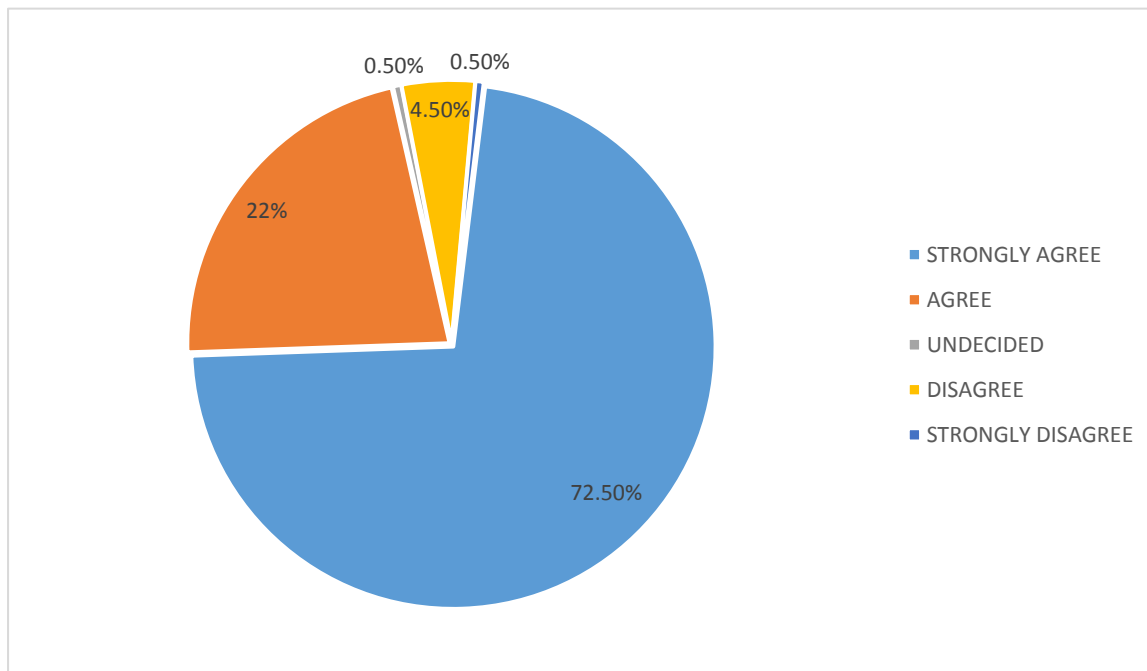
The normal traditional lecture method is having the great drawback that all students may not be able to grasp the content effectively. But the incorporation these audio- visual aids can provide them with an opportunity to understand the matters in an equally effective way to some extent as its appeals to many senses. The visual and audio realities can benefit even an average student to understand the subject comparatively better.

Tabular Presentation of Collected Data

Categories	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q 1	85	15	0	0	0
Q 2	80	15	5	0	0
Q 3	75	15	0	10	0
Q 4	90	10	0	0	0
Q 5	85	15	0	0	0
Q 6	85	15	0	0	0
Q 7	50	45	0	5	0
Q 8	50	30	0	15	5
Q 9	50	35	0	15	0
Q10	75	25	0	0	0
Total	725	220	5	45	5

As presented in the tabular form, from the received 1000 responses, 725 responses have strongly agreed upon the effectiveness of audio visual aids by responding very positively to the statements. 220 responses again reaffirmed it by agreeing upon the statements given in regard to the influence of audio visual aids. 45 responses are in disagreement and 5 responses for each with undecided and strongly disagree responses. This clearly puts forward the concept that the audio visual aids are essential element to make the English language learning more effective and interesting from the very point of view of the students.

Graphic presentation of collected data



The graphic presentation once again makes it clear the fact that, interestingly more than the majority of the students i.e., 72.5% of students are of the opinion to have effective audio visual aids in the English language classrooms to make their learning of the language more realistic and coherent. And another 22% of the students too are of the similar opinion of incorporating audio visual aids as a helping strategy to the English classrooms for better understanding and long-lasting results. Very minimum number of students i.e., 4.5% of the students do disagree on the effectiveness of audio visual aids. And 0.5% of the students are with the standing of undecided and strongly disagree responses. This again makes strong the fact that audio visual aids are inevitable technique of this modern digital era.

Findings and Conclusion

Attaining the attention of the students and retaining it for a longer time is a great deal in a classroom atmosphere as the young minds are likely to wander at ease even without much reason. Here, audio visual aids have a great impact on capturing and sustaining the attention of students. Audio Visual Aids helps in effective perceptual and conceptual learning. This also arouses interest and motivates students to learn. It is helpful for new learning. It helps in saving energy and time for both the teacher and students. It provides near realistic experience. It can meet individual demands too.

Since, the audio visual aids like “Companion CD” has well arranged with proper study objectives, it is really a great assistance and support for the teachers to make their language classrooms innovative amidst their busy schedules too. It also provides a rare opportunity to the students, as audio visual aids wide open the chance of revisiting these documents when the teachers are not available or not able to repeat the completed portions.

As this research has only looked into the elementary level there is the scope of further study in all the other levels such as higher secondary levels and higher education systems. Educational and respective government sectors should take necessary steps to improve the educational policies.

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