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DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER COMPETENCE AND TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

The article emphasizes on the need of qualities of teachers for enhancement of students' outcome. Thus in teaching- learning process teacher competency and teaching effectiveness plays a pivotal role in the students' achievement. Teachers have to be professionally trained to develop the skills of teaching. Thus effective Total Quality Management helps in producing competent and effective teachers. The quality of teacher education has to be maintained for product design and manufacturing process. NCTE has highlighted the importance of practice teaching for achieving this end.

Competency is usually understood to mean possessing the required knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a task adequately. At a professional level competency includes understanding the processes involved as well as having performance skills and an academic and theoretical background. Effective teaching depends on the attitude of the teacher, the way he sees his own role and the way he relates to his students. To play his role competently the teacher is expected to understand the significance of some question such as who, whom, why, where, how, when and what of teaching. The students' achievements and success are greatly influenced by this entire question.

Key words : Teacher competency, Teaching effectiveness, Students achievement.

According to Tagore, "a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame".

[Popham (1971b) stated his interpretation of the evidence regarding profession training of teachers.]

Every profession worthy of the name derives its professionalism precisely from the fact that its members possess a special expertise not present in non-members of the profession. Lawyers can prepare legal briefs. Surgeons can perform operations. Accountants can balance financial reports. People of the street can't do these things. But although teaching being one of the oldest and popular professions the students opt for it as the last choice why? The respect a teacher gets when the students life is a great matter, are made better citizens which the need of the country to make a better community. So if our teachers are better trained and thus possess unique capabilities to promote desirable behavioral changes in learns it is like the

enormous dividends we get from members of the teaching profession which raises his/her status among all the profession.

Every profession worthy of the name derives its professionalism precisely from the fact that its member possess a special expertise not present in non-member of the profession law years can prepare legal briefs. Surgeons can perform operation. Accountants can balance financial reports. People off the street can't do these things. [But do teachers bring anything to bear on an instructional situation other than a general education, native intelligence reasonable dedication and borrowed teaching tricks? These attributes will permit a teacher to get through the school day, and a number of pupil will undoubtedly learn something.] But contrast our current education situation with the enormous dividends we might be getting if members of the teaching profession possessed really unique, unique capabilities to promote desirable behaviour change in learners.

But teaching being a flourishing profession, the teachers are still not considered as professional because of the lack of proper teacher training programme.

In response to the lack of evidence supporting the effectiveness of traditional programs for preparing teachers, the competencies for teaching system was designed to achieve identifiable competencies that facilitate children's learning. In changing times, unchanging education is not acceptable. Recent confluences of psychological, technical, and educational developments have brought within reach the attainment of educational excellence which has been long sought after. Although developments in the social and behavioral sciences and in educational technology have offered a potential for more effective instructional methodology. The rate of educational change has remained painfully and dangerously slow.

Teaching is one of the oldest professions. [It has no specific history]. However it was even in the Gurukula system where students were sent to the gurus for gain of knowledge and experience shown request teachers (gurus) interacted with students in an organized way. The Greeks had a similar system where teachers and philosophers were approached by individuals to gain knowledge. How it was in those days is quite different from how it is today. But at present, it seems that the teaching profession is the least respected profession. You ask any child what he wants to become in future, and you will be surprised to know that it takes one out of a thousand children to mention the teaching profession.

The questions now come – why is the teaching profession stigmatized? Why is it that many feel shy to be known as teacher? In fact there are many who are teaching now because, for them teaching is the profession of the last resort.

With his revelation, it is imperative to assess the responsibilities of a teacher and to see if we need to do more for the profession to be recognized and shake off the shackles of disrespect and neglect.

To be professional, therefore, a teacher must know all the ethics of teaching which is not just importing knowledge but making, sure that the subject matter is

handed well to bring about a change in the student and to make the student a better citizen. This can be done only if the teacher plans out well.

Teachers should excel as professionals. They should also consider teaching as a noble profession which has its own ethics and respect. After all, the greatest names in history were written because of the efforts made by committed and selfless teachers.

Competency based instruction is an effective means of accelerating change in education. Its implementation is well underway in curriculum development in the public schools. If the same concept were applied to teacher education, it could renovate and revitalize the teaching profession. Competency based criteria are traditional in many professions. Precise criteria for specific skills required by students of medicine, dentistry and architecture, among other professions. Further the board examinations for admission into these professions require not only proof of adequate knowledge but also demonstration of mastery of specific and complex professional skills.

No thinking person can deny the urgency of such contemporary problems as equal educational opportunity for all children, improved financing for education, and effective utilization of advanced technology in education. Politicians and parents as well as other citizens in the community must direct their attention and financial support toward resolving the problems of education, but no real solution to educational problems can be achieved without substantial improvement in the teacher's ability to teach. Improving teacher performance through more effective teacher preparation is an essential ingredient in solving most educational problems. A mean of rapidly renovating and regenerating teacher education is through systematically implementing a competency based program.

The system approach is a method for dealing with complex realities and solving problems previously considered beyond analysis. Applying system analysis to teacher education yields both delivery systems for learning and management systems for accountability, which are essential to competency based teacher education. Competency based programs require explicitly defined objectives and criteria for assessment, both of which have only recently become a major concern to educators. In the past, most programs have operated without formulating their operational objectives and for the most part, without effectively coordinating and integrating the content of theory courses with practical teaching experience. Further more, most programs tended to be eclectic theory courses, methods courses, and practicum often presented in consistent points of view. Although in most professions theory and practice form the core of professional preparation, teacher education programs appeared to lack objectives that operationally integrated theory into practice.

If the major objective of public education is to teach children, then teacher preparation should facilitate children's learning. Consequently, a teacher's competency cannot be evaluated by the courses listed on the college transcript, the grades earned, the total number of course hours completed, or the time spent in

fulfilling practicum and other certification requirements, but rather must be determined by the effects of the teacher's performance on children's learning.

According to Combs (1965), a popular approach to identifying and defining good teaching is to describe the characteristics of a good teacher. The belief behind his approach is that if the characteristics of effective teachers are known then beginners can be taught these characteristics. Combs points out that a good teacher should:

1. Know his subject.
2. Know much about related subjects.
3. Be adaptable to new knowledge.
4. Understand the process of becoming.
5. Recognize individual differences.
6. Be a good communicator.
7. Develop an inquiring mind.
8. Be available
9. Be committed
10. Be enthusiastic
11. Have a sense of humor
12. Have humility.
13. Cherish his own individuality.
14. Have convictions.

A few studies attempted to relate more precise teacher traits or behaviours to teacher effectiveness. The thirty-four studies reviewed by Stern (1963) indicated that good or effective teaching patterns are characterized by the following teacher traits or behaviors.

1. Willingness to be flexible.
2. Ability to perceive from the students point of view.
3. Ability to personalize teaching.
4. Willingness to experiment.
5. Skill in questioning
6. Knowledge of subject matter.
7. Provision of well-established examination procedures.
8. Provision of definite study aids.

9. Reflection of a supportive and appreciative attitude.
10. Use of conversational manner in teaching.

Since the beginning of this century, researchers have tried to develop a satisfactory measure of teaching proficiency. Most of these researchers have used administrator ratings, pupil ratings, observations, or pupils' scores on standardized tests. Rating by administrators or observations by experts tend to be highly subjective and favor teacher performance reflecting orthodoxy methods reflecting the observer's past. These ratings do not correlate well with measures of pupil achievement. Although pupil performance on standardized tests does provide an objective measure of pupil progress, most studies have not been able to relate specific teacher competencies to pupils' differential achievement as measured by the tests.

Studies employing observations of teacher performance by experienced supervisory personnel also indicate the irrelevancy of teacher training. Ryans (1951) reported a study of 275 teachers which showed the irrelevance of the amount of teacher training to teaching success.

No, 'Dynamic teaching' is possible without a dynamic teacher; such a teacher should immediately come down to the level of his student. Not mere words but the virtues remain the basic qualifications of a teacher. Effective teaching depends on the attitude of the teacher, the way he sees his own role and the way he relates to his students. The teacher competency (both proficiency and skill) mainly depends on his multifaceted roles or what he / she is expected to perform both inside and outside the classroom and even out side the institution. Teacher should act as and agent of transmitting knowledge and interpreting it effectively for future benefits. To play his role competently the teacher is expected to understand the significance of some question such as who, whom, why, where, how, when and what of teaching. The students' achievements and success are greatly influenced by all these question.

Thus in the teaching learning process Teacher's competence and teaching effectiveness both play a pivotal role on the learning out come of the pupils. The out come of this academic exercise is the modification on the pupil in order to make him a better human being who can suitably fit himself to socio-cultural milieu of the country. The better and more manifest this change in the students; the more effective is the teacher.

Competency is usually understood to mean possessing the required knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a task adequately. At a professional level competency includes understanding the processes involved as well as having performance skills and an academic and theoretical background. Of all the different factors which influence the quality of educational development, the quality competency and character of teachers are the most significant (Edu. Com. 1964-66). The term "Competent" and "Competence" were used in assessing student teachers in reports of schools in England prepared by ofsted inspector. (Dept.of Edu.1993). According to Universal Dictionary, Reader Digest, Competency is the state or quality of being capable or competent in some skills or ability which is adequate for

teaching. According to Factor on file dictionary of Education it is 'Predetermined set of out comes that is usually related to Particular skills, knowledge and attitude.

The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) has identified the following ten competencies:

1. Contextual competencies.
2. Conceptual competencies.
3. Curricular and content competencies.
4. Transactional Competencies.
5. Competencies in other educational activities.
6. Competencies related to the preparation of teaching learning materials.
7. Evaluation competencies.
8. Management competencies.
9. Competencies related to parental contact and cooperation.
10. Competencies related to community contact and cooperation.

The National objective of producing competent and dedicated teachers can only be achieved through effective. Total quality Management (TQM). The quality of teacher education is to be maintained in terms of the product design and manufacturing process. In a technical sense, quality in education depends upon the product design (instructional objectives in behavioral terms). It equally depends upon the manufacturing process (instructional strategies to train teachers), infrastructure facilities, skills, of workers as well as on the professionalism of the faculty, objective testing procedure and adoption of quality control techniques. The product design may be determined by the instructional objectives of the teacher education programme in terms of the competencies to be developed among prospective teachers in behavioral terms. Murphy (1992) has also emphasized the competency based teacher education (CBTE) programme. The product design of this CBTE should aim to develop among prospective teachers competencies related to subject knowledge, subject application, classroom management, professional development and assessment cum recording of pupils progress. The performance areas for quality teachers are streamlined as performance in the classroom, school-level performance, performance related to out of school activities, parental contact, community contact and cooperation. Besides this teachers have commitment to the learner, the society, the profession, to achieve excellence and commitment to have basic human values.

NCTE has highlighted the importance of practice teaching to achieve this expectation. The field experiences in teacher education are conducted under a variety of names. The common terms are 'practice-teaching', 'internship' and 'student teaching', etc. In fact school experience programmes SEP is the single most powerful intervention in a teacher's professional preparation programme. The concept of total quality management must be at least strictly adhered to in this phase of teacher preparation programme, as it is a powerful intervention in this professional development. Consequently supervision of student teachers is the most powerful process.

Competency in teaching requires performance skills as well as knowledge and higher level conceptualizations. Competency is usually understood to mean possessing the required knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a task adequately. At a professional level competency includes understanding the processes involved as well as having performance skills and an academic and theoretical background. This generally accepted concept of professional competence is the basis for differentiating between a professional and a technician. The technician training emphasizes performance skills whereas the professional's preparation includes more theoretical background, academic content, and higher-level abstraction. In the competencies for Teaching system, competency is used to describe professional ability, including both the ability to perform specific teaching functions and the ability to demonstrate acquired knowledge and higher-level conceptualization. The Competencies for teaching system is designed to teach teachers the processes of instruction. These processes include (1) observing a child, (2) teaching diagnostically, (3) writing objectives, (4) eliciting and reinforcing desirable behaviors, (5) teaching of transfer, (6) evaluating outcomes, (7) questioning, (8) planning instruction, (9) managing the classroom, (10) interacting with parents, (11) counseling pupils, and (12) communicating with members of other professions.

A process is a method of achieving something involving a number of steps or operation. Although the Competencies for teaching system employ teaching by objectives and accountability, these are only components in the processes being taught. Competency based teacher education implies a more complex program of professional preparation than does teaching by objectives or accountability. An objective may describe either a process or the end product of process. If it describes only a product, it may not facilitate development of the processes essential to achieving professional competence. The Competencies for teaching system employs the concept of processes. This means that the student teacher acquires essential knowledge and skills in sequences that constitute processes. These processes have broad application and can be adapted and implemented creatively.

Probably all professions rely on a combination of the practitioner's natural aptitudes professional preparation and experience. Professional preparation should give the student essential skills and knowledge so that the graduate is equipped for competent practice, while maintaining the highest possible standards for the profession. Some specially endowed individuals will be productive beyond professional standards and some will contribute new and better techniques that will in turn improve the profession.

The teaching profession has relied excessively on mystique, or "national gifts". This does not deny the importance of admitting only suitable candidates to the profession nor does it undervalues the contributions of uniquely gifted teachers, professional preparation should equip all those who graduate with the knowledge and skills required for a high level of professional competence. Unfortunately, although the concept of competency – based professional preparation has had long and substantial application in a number of other professions, teaching is still regarded by many as a nearly mystical process that defies analysis. It is a widely held belief that teachers are born, not made. The popularity of this belief is partly

due to the fact that programs of teacher preparation have been so ineffective in the past. Competency is usually understood to mean possessing the required knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a task adequately. At a professional level competency includes understanding the processes involved as well as having performance skills and an academic and theoretical background.

Some people may argue that teacher competence and teaching effectiveness are not such important factors in students' learning; if students are serious and sincere, or if other congenial factors like parental guidance are there, then they may fare well in their examinations even if their subject teachers lack in competency and effectiveness. Teachers must embrace the view that effective teaching means constantly being aware of and attending to students' struggles to learn and continually adjusting their teaching strategies and techniques to help students work through difficulties. In doing so, teachers should set high learning expectations, focus on core ideas, and aim for deep, integrated understanding of inquiry and knowledge. To help students reach teachers' aims and expectations, teachers must understand how learners actively construct new knowledge, as well as the complexity of the learning process, the importance of students' interests, and students' potential anxieties and conflicts with concepts.

Flanders and Simon (1969) have defined that teachers' effectiveness is an area of research which is concerned with relationship between characteristics of teachers' teaching acts and their effects on the educational outcome class-room teaching.

On the basis of opinions expressed by the educators above and experts in the field of education the operational definition of teachers effectiveness which emerges is: an effective teacher is he who has clear concept of the subject matter, ability to write clear objectives for his course, ability to organize learning materials, ability to communicate his knowledge to the students successfully and to deal with class room situations. Society wants to have teachers who are capable of developing sense of responsibility in children besides imparting knowledge to them. Therefore, it is essential to have some qualities (personal, academic and professional etc) which make a teacher effective. There are three main approaches in the prediction of teachers' effectiveness viz. in terms of teacher personality trait, teachers' behavior and activity and product of teachers' effort. The criteria of teachers' effectiveness can be found through pupils' achievement, judgments of ratings by administrators, principals, self and students and Performance test, etc.

Reynolds & Mujis (1999) studied the effect of teacher behavior and classroom organisation on pupils' progress in mathematics was studied in years 1, 3 and 5 of primary schools in the UK participating in a mathematics intervention programme. They collected data on a total of 78 teachers and 2,128 pupils. The study noted that teachers' behavior was able to explain between 60% and 100% of pupils' progress on the Numeracy test (developed by the National Foundation for Educational Research).

Teacher education is a system that carries the responsibility of preparing teachers who could teach the children in schools effectively. Teacher effectiveness inter alia stands for school effectiveness that is what we mean by quality education in schools. Yes, it is the quality teacher education that is needed for quality school education. In the words of education commission (1964-66):

“The essence of program of teacher education is quality and in its absence teacher educations become not only a financial waste but a source of overall deterioration in educational standards.” P.72

Quality school education is a question of making joint efforts on the parts of all the teachers. These should be the persons of caliber and character. Teaching in schools should be their passion and not last resort. Also, much is expected from Teacher Education institutions. Thus quality school education or to improve the quality of teaching in schools depends on the quality of teachers. They should be dedicated and teach from the heart. They should be benevolent, simple and should have a missionary attitude. And all the more they should believe in the student’s ability and love them. They also should be a strong disciplinarian.

A strong relationship between a behavior variable and a measure of teacher effectiveness need not be regarded as evidence that the observed behavior caused the measured effect. Instead, the measure of effectiveness is used as an indicator of teacher competence, inferring that teachers who are effective are more competent on the average than teachers who are ineffective. The distinction between competent and effective implied in this statement is important and yet easy to forget. Competence has to do with how a teacher teaches as is measured in terms of the teacher’s behavior, how effective a teacher is, is measured in terms of pupil learning. In other words an effective teacher is always competent, but a competent teacher may not be effective, for a multitude of reasons.

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