

TEACHER – PEDAGOGY APPROACH FOR SUSTAINABLE PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

Quality concerns of an institution shall be explained in terms of *hardware* and *software*. The hardware comprises of building and other infrastructural facilities and software involves teachers, students and administrative staff. Various agencies such as National Council for Educational Research & Training (NCERT), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), National University for Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), State Institute of Educational Management & Training (SIEMAT), Institute for Advanced Study in Education (IASE), College of Teacher Education (CTE), District Institute of Education for Teachers (DIET) etc are functioning in our country for the monitoring of school education. First of all it is essential to identify the major quality determinants for attaining and sustaining quality. Hence the present study attempts to throw light into one of the key aspects of institutional quality namely Teacher and Instructional strategies.

The present study follows the procedure of descriptive research. Document analysis was the important tool for the study. Interview with teachers, Head of the Institutions, observation and discussion with experts were also used. Quality of a teacher should be an essential input for institutional quality. Other aspects such as quantity, level of performance, attitude, environmental awareness, peace concerns; life skills acquisition, technological skills, etc are also highly influential in this regard. Teacher quality involves teacher qualifications, personal professional attributes, and technical ability. Institutional mechanism for teacher effectiveness and aspects of instructional strategies that have influence on quality were also discussed.

SUSTAINABILITY OF INSTITUTIONAL PROFICIENCY

Sustainability of quality is a concept getting worldwide momentum nowadays. Quality concerns got attention in Indian context also at various levels. A National Assessment and Accreditation Council was set up for the quality assurance of higher education institutions. Various programmes were already conducted for quality assurance of school education also. But an organized drive for quality assessment and accreditation was not yet formed.

The fact of joyless learning envisaged in the Yashpal committee report revealed the actual school education scenario of the country. "It is hard to reconcile the rigorous 'academic' regime that is imposed on children from an early age with the widespread complaint made about the declining norms and performance of the formal system of education"(Yashpal committee 1992). The committee also remarked that "The manner in which the syllabus is 'covered' in the average classroom is by means of reading the prescribed textbook aloud, with occasional noting of salient points on the blackboard." Except students of some institutions, the majority of our school-going children are made to view learning at school as a boring, even unpleasant and bitter experience. They are daily forced to look upon education as mainly a process of preparing for examinations. "Literacy is not the end of education or even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated."(Gandhiji) Various agencies such as National Council for Educational Research & Training (NCERT), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), National University for Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), State Institute of Educational Management & Training (SIEMAT), Institute for Advanced Study in Education (IASE), College of Teacher Education (CTE), District Institute of Education for Teachers (DIET) etc are functioning in our country for the monitoring of school education. Measures for quality education have been proposed by these institutions from time to time. The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme aims to provide education of all children in the age group of 6-14 years quality elementary education by the year 2010 and also improving access, enrolment, retention and quality of elementary education

The present era is an era of information explosion. The role of teacher has changed from the sole custodian of knowledge into one among the many sources of information. Outreaching of technology, evolving new roles to teacher etc, created a boost in the educational scenario recently. Difference in infrastructure and accessibility options resulted in uneven progress in school education. There existing disparities of opportunities and there by quality in school education. NCERT suggested the following quality indicators in relation to SSA ,such as Infra structural facilities , School management & community support, school and classroom environment , curriculum and teaching learning materials , teacher & teacher preparation , classroom practices & process , opportunity time , learners assessment, monitoring and supervision . Periodical assessment of all the quality indicators is envisaged in the document though there are some missing links. The strength of any curriculum depends on the teacher and how effectively it is being transacted. The teacher and transactional

strategies have high influence in attaining the curricular objectives especially, the affective and psychomotor ones

Significance of the study:

Quality concerns of an institution shall be explained in terms of *hardware* and *software*. The hardware comprises of building and other infrastructural facilities and software involves teachers, students and administrative staff. Preparation of guidelines for assessment, how to apply for accreditation, what criteria need to be satisfied, methodology of assessment, institutional preparation, self appraisal report, grading etc, are some of the major issues related to institutional assessment and accreditation. First of all it is essential to identify the major quality determinants for attaining and sustaining quality. Hence the present study attempts to throw light into one of the key aspects of institutional quality namely Teacher and Instructional strategies.

Prospects of the Study

Teachers have to play a significant role in quality assurance in school education. Use of Proper instructional strategies also is significant in quality school education.

Methodology

The present study follows the procedure of descriptive research. Document analysis was the important tool for the study. Interview with teachers, Head of the Institutions, observation and discussion with experts were also used for supplementing the data obtained through the analysis of documents

Findings

Analysis of the data obtained through the different tools and techniques the study reaches to the following findings. The findings are given as in two categories such as teacher & instructional strategy separately.

TEACHER:

Teacher is the sole custodian and distributor of knowledge from the time immemorial. The role of a teacher mainly depends on the methodology adopted for knowledge dissemination. Hence quality of a teacher should be an essential input for institutional quality. Other aspects such as quantity, level of performance, attitude, environmental awareness, peace concerns; life skills acquisition, technological skills, etc are also highly influential in this regard. Different schedules and appraisal reports are essential for assessing these aspects of teachers at various levels

Teacher Quality

This involves teacher qualifications, personal professional attributes, and technical ability

Teacher qualifications

Minimum qualifications required for the profession to specific levels. There exist common norms at national level for teacher qualifications. There of course will be teachers having additional qualifications in most of the schools. Acquiring

of additional qualifications should be a direct indicator of quality enhancement. Institutions providing opportunities to teachers for acquiring additional qualifications satisfy themselves in quality assurance. One condition which can be imposed here is to specify the nature of the additional qualification which the teacher could have enrolled while in service. That is the qualification should either enhance the content knowledge or increase the instructional skill of the teacher. Institutional facility to involve in such programmes should also consider as a means of quality enhancement from the part of institution.

Personal Attributes

The personal attributes of a teacher mainly involve those which are essential for a person as a teacher. Various criteria in this area can be summarised as ; Regularity , punctuality, humanistic view, democratic approach, leadership, etc. It is the personal attributes uplift a teacher as a good role model for students most of the time; as they model the teacher greatly in their personal life .

Professional Attributes

The professional attributes of a teacher may include professional approach, professional growth, Contributions, Innovations and experimentations in the level or area of specialization.

Professional approach of a teacher mainly reflects in her Authenticity, Preparedness, Involvement, Attitude, and Enthusiasm.

1.Authenticity

Authenticity of a teacher should be well known among the students. It doesn't mean that teachers must know everything when the learner demands, but the teacher who is willing to clarify a doubt immediately after the class or at the earliest possible, when she is not sure about the answer. She will be authentic in the sense that relay upon authentic sources and authentic approaches.

2.Preparedness

Preparedness of a teacher involves her readiness for involving in instructional process. The state of mental readiness referred here is similar to that of motivation in pupils. The state of mental readiness directly influences the preparedness of a teacher. It is the duty of the institution to identify the teachers who are not properly motivated and the reasons there of for quality assurance.

3 .Involvement

Involvement of a teacher in the daily activities of a teacher can be easily rated using a checklist or some similar tools. In most of the institutions the number of teachers shows average involvement may be marginal, and most of the activities of that institution should be centered around them. If all of hem absent on one day the activities of that day will be derailed.

4 .Attitude

The need of a positive attitude towards teaching and scientific attitude in solving issues and problems contributed towards professionalism of a teacher. Most of the uninterested children in our classrooms may the scapegoats of teachers who have no or negative attitude towards teaching. Scientific attitude is

that needs to be developed in every individual, because all must know how to solve a problem in life scientifically.

5 Enthusiasm

An enthusiastic teacher is the one reaches up to the level of appreciation of teaching. Appreciation in teaching refers to “realizing the **Atma** (spirit) of the class”. It is not an easy job. Since teaching is a highly skillful profession, the mastery of which needs comprehensive practice of all the micro skills and the process of integrating them in meaningful manner. The teacher education institutions should be equipped to train students with this professionalism in mind

6 Membership in Professional bodies

Membership in professional organizations and bodies and nature of participatory behaviour in those can be considered as an indicator professional of quality . The main function of such organizations is to create an awareness about the recent developments, issues, and priorities in the area and discipline

Technical ability

Technical ability refers to integration of teaching technology and handling technology for teaching. The techniques of teaching have so many diversities due to the remarkable development of technology. Only a teacher having correct functional knowledge alone could identify the correct technique for a specific topic using appropriate technology. Hence the functional knowledge of instructional technology and handling instrumental technology is essential for a quality teacher.

Other aspects such as teaching experience, teacher requirement of the institution, actual teacher strength, teacher – pupil ratio, administrative roles of teachers, etc. also are determinants of quality

1 Teaching experience

Practice made one perfect is a common saying. It is true in the case of everybody who engages in activities which demands proficiency in specific skills. An experienced teacher thus can overtake the newcomers using their field experience. It is this power of experience leads our societies, when they are in the form of learning societies. It doesn't mean that experience in years simply contributed to perfection of action. Experience will boost the quality only when necessary corrections are made on the basis of feedback and introspection.

2 Teacher requirements

Teacher requirement of the institution is generally fixed on the basis of student strength in the institution. Subject teachers, language teachers, Special teachers for physical education, music, art, SUPW, Information technology, Yoga, and teacher for differentially abled children are the categories at present. Hence teacher requirement is an indicator of quality.

3 Actual strength of Teachers

The requirement of teachers and actual strength available will vary in most of the institutions. It is essential for an institution to have all essential posts filled up before the commencement of classes . Thus, the actual strength of teachers will become an indicator of quality.

4 Teacher –Pupil Ratio

Controversies are going on every year on the issue of teacher – pupil ratio. Though teacher pupil ratio is fixed as 1: 45 in Kerala, in many of the schools class strength rises up to 55 in secondary level and 60 in higher secondary levels. Since practicing of social constructivists approach became prevalent in education system, a high teacher pupil ratio would have negative influence on learning process. Hence teacher – pupil ratio is a major indicator of institutional quality.

5 Administrative role of Teachers

In addition to daily teaching, teachers have to play different administrative and other supporting roles for the proper functioning of the institution. The roles such as office bearers of different clubs, programmes, committees, academic monitoring, Mid day meal programme, institutional discipline etc. Proper training is essential for every teacher to take up such duties effectively. Effective realization of such supporting roles is very essential for institutional quality

Institutional mechanisms for teacher Effectiveness

Another quality indicator with respect to teacher is, institutional mechanisms for ensuring teacher effectiveness. Various measures such as, collection of feedback, enrichment programmes, extension activities, etc should be counted in this category

1 Feedback

There are different measures for collecting feedback, ranges from a single piece of paper contained responses written by students to standerdised self appraisal formats. Observation of students' responses and their body language itself will provide feed back. Peer evaluation also is of great value in self identification and improvement. Institution based self appraisal also can be tried out. Among all these various types of feedback the one provided by students will be the most appropriate one, because they provide primary data about the performance of a teacher. Institutional leadership is essential for collecting feedback in comprehensive manner.

2 Enrichment Programmes

Teacher enrichment programmes need to be organized in every institution to develop quality concern among the staff members in a unified manner. Various programmes such as staff meeting, subject councils, and Academic reviews guest talks, seminars, etc. All such academic activities in a regular manner enhance teacher effectiveness.

3 Extension Programmes

Extension programmes are those programmes that are organized for the benefit of different sections of the society. Such programmes can be either organized by the institution or institution be a venue for the same. In any of such case opportunity for teacher participation is essential. Such opportunities help teachers to realise the requirements of society, hence enhances teacher effectiveness .

Teacher the central figure of learning process will be the most significant determinant of quality in school education. Even today our society places teachers in the same position as in the gurukula system, at least in school education. Hence concentrate on equipping teachers and drawing out the best of them is the best way to ensure quality.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

The present era is the era of technology such as instructional technology, knowledge technology and information technology. Intelligent use of effective technology for optimum learning is the need of the time. Though learners learn through cooperation and collaboration, as envisaged by social constructivists, properly planned and executed “learning situations should naturally happen” for effective learning, here a successful teacher is a creator of meaningful situations. Importance of instructional strategies is always prevalent because of this reason. A teacher recognized as effective by students because of the way in which she is performing the art of instructional strategy so naturally and meaning fully in a free flowing manner. Learner friendly and topic specific strategies would be helpful to teachers to acquire such a position. There are a number and variety of methods and techniques for teaching at different levels, but still we rely mainly on talk and occasionally chalk also. In various classifications of educational objectives, ability to apply, positive attitude, and skill acquisition, are identified as the most desirable outcomes. The chaining of mental operations to emotional patterns leading to physical actions could not be developed using lecture method only. The significance of instructional strategy is due to its influence on the quality of outcomes of school education.

Aspects of Instructional Strategy

Selection of Instructional strategy is determined by various factors such as level of learner, topic, infrastructural facilities, class strength, time available, etc.

1 Learner

Learner is the first aspect that should be taken care of while selecting strategy. The mental level and age group of learners, and their background are the factors influencing strategy selection with respect to learner. Inappropriate strategy would have no positive influence on learning. Hence relevance of a strategy is a quality determinant of strategy.

2 Topic

Topic is an important factor which influences selection of strategy. Each topic can be best transacted using specific strategies. In order to identify the appropriate strategy in advance, year and unit planning is essential. So institutional level planning and pedagogical analysis should influence quality of instruction.

3 Infrastructural facilities

Adoptions of many strategies require minimum infrastructural facilities. Even enthusiast teacher could not use adequate strategy due to unavailability of

enough infrastructural facilities. Hence, availability of essential infrastructural facilities becomes a determinant of quality instruction.

4 Strength of the Class

Class strength is another important factor which determines instruction. Many a time large sized classes' tempted teachers to stick on lecturers. Many strategies like demonstration, experimentation .etc, require small classroom size

5 Availability of Time

In many cases, teachers have to cover up large quantities of syllabi, because still our education system mainly depends on quantity of lessons. This perception prompts the teachers to depend on lectures so that they can cover up portions in minimum time. Result percentage is another aspect related to time. There are many schools in which portions of ninth standard is finished up by the month of October and prepare children for public examination of next year using learning by heart only with an objective of getting cent percent first class or pass. In such situations no teacher could demand for a better strategy, because of job security.

Thus, in the use of appropriate instructional strategies, both individual readiness and institutional readiness is essential. Adoption of relevant strategy is essential to realise the ultimate objectives of education can be stated as thoughtful, emotionally well balanced actions for sustainable future.

Conclusion

Teacher the central figure of learning process will be the most significant determinant of quality in school education. Even today our society places teachers in the same position as in the gurukula system, at least in school education. Hence concentrate on equipping teachers and drawing out the best of them is the best way to ensure quality. Both individual readiness and institutional readiness is essential for the selection of appropriate strategies of instruction. Adoption of relevant strategy is essential to realise the ultimate objectives of education can be stated as thoughtful, emotionally well balanced actions for sustainable future.

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