

Efficiency of Teacher Educators through Life skill building

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Abstract

In the present day context, it is not enough for teachers to merely give information and knowledge to students ...human beings need wisdom. They need character. Life skills must become a central focus of educational efforts (Kapil Sibal, September 11, 2012). Teacher Educators are the one who trains the teachers who in turn develop the students. Students are the Nation builders. Hence the investigators took cognizance of the above said fact and done this research. The objective of this study was to ascertain the efficiency of teacher educator within the context of life skill building with special reference to Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology. Teacher Educator Life Skill Efficiency Questionnaire (TELSEQ) consisting of 83 statements to ascertain the life skills of teacher educators in their Problem Solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology with five point scale i.e Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good and Excellent was developed by the investigators. The questionnaire was administered by the investigators with 35 teacher educators who handle M.Ed. programme from seven colleges of education affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Tamil Nadu. Result reveals that teacher educators were aware of the components of life skills such as Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology and they were found efficient within the context of their life skill building.

Key words: Life skill building, Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology

Introduction

As the Nation's attention is increasingly focused on the outcomes of education, policymakers have undertaken a wide range of reforms to overhaul teacher education, ranging from primary to higher education level, new curricula, and new instructional strategies as teacher education is the mother of all the professions. Most education reformers agree that effective teaching is defined by improving student learning, but they disagree on how to measure teacher effectiveness and how to use those measurements to improve teaching. Thus far, most of the policy debate on teacher effectiveness has focused on using test scores to implement merit pay or to fire teachers, but those strategies alone will not lift teacher performance on a large scale. The best way to improve teacher efficiency is to provide teachers with support and guidance that are grounded in effectiveness- that is, which uses effectiveness data to enhance life skills for professional development and teacher education,

strengthen evaluations and career development, and revamp accountability policies to reward and encourage student learning.

Life skills are developed as a result of a constructive processing of information, impressions, encounters and experiences, -both individual and social -that are a part of one's daily life and work and the rapid changes that occur in the course of one's life .The social dimensions are particularly important as they condition life itself and compel individuals to purposefully acquire skills, develop attitudes and values in order to face and master real life situations (Ouane 2002, Ahmad Farhady & Maryam Nooralizadeh 2012). Indeed Life skills education can facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychosocial skills in a customarily and developmentally appropriate way; it contributes to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problems, and the protection of human rights (WHO, 2001).

Teachers can be made professionally competent by teaching them life skills through teacher education program. Once teachers acquire these life skills they can apply them in their personal life as well as implementing it in teaching. Hence pre service teacher education should plan to include life skills in the syllabus itself. This will enable the teachers to think independently, to upgrade themselves to respond according to students' needs (Usha Prakash, 2011).

A good institution will produce individuals who will be devoted to the profession and make their mark in the activities organized by them while going to the field. In fact, teacher educators are responsible for producing quality teachers. Quality processes tend to focus on 'core' aspects of education such as learning-teaching and course organization. In other words teacher educators' way of organizing theoretical framework, practical sessions and life skills development programme affect the future teachers. The role of the teacher has changed significantly in recent years along with the status of teaching as a profession and the demands and expectations the community places on teachers and schools.

For many years teacher educators and researchers have debated over which variables influence student achievement. A growing body of evidence suggests that schools can make a great difference in terms of student achievement, and a substantial portion of that difference is attributable to teachers. Specifically, differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning, far outweighing the effects of differences in class size and class heterogeneity (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Students who are assigned to one ineffective teacher after another have significantly lower achievement and learning than those who are assigned to a sequence of several highly effective teachers (Sanders and Rivers, 1996). Thus the impact of teacher efficiency (or inefficiency) seems to be additive and cumulative. In fact if teacher educator is efficient, the ensuring teachers can be efficient which in turn affects students positively.

The educational philosophy in ancient India stressed on the teacher that they were being responsible both for literacy/knowledge and personality development of their ward. However, education, which is currently prevalent in our country, is achievement oriented than child oriented. It does not address the needs of all the children who in spite of various levels of scholastic competence are capable of learning and need to develop those skills, and become empowered to live effectively in this world. This empowerment is very essential in today's context in India as there is rapid globalization and urbanization with a breaking up of joint families and the traditional support systems.

Teacher competencies and teacher strategies are a multidimensional concept which plays a vital role in the progress of students as a whole and in particular the educational achievement of students. The quality of teaching learning process is enhanced by the teachers and teacher practices. As teacher education is the mother of all the profession, the meta teacher so called teacher educators is accountable to update the professional preparation to meet out the present challenges in education. Hence Life skill education is imperative in all its dimensions.

Objectives of the present study

The present study is committed to accomplish the following objectives:

- To design and develop a Questionnaire to ascertain the level of Life skill efficiency of Teacher Educators belonging to various institutions.
- To ascertain the efficiency of Teacher Educators with special reference to Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology.

Research Questions

1. Are teacher educators aware of the different components of Life skill Education?
2. Are teacher educators efficient with special reference to Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology?

Method and Procedure

The present study adopted descriptive method with survey technique for data collection. The investigators, after conceptualising different components of life skill education by number of reviews constructed Teacher Educator Life Skill Efficiency Questionnaire (TELSEQ) consisting of 83 statements to ascertain the life skill education of teacher educators in their Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology with five point scale i.e Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good and Excellent. There are Sixteen items in the tool which represent 'Problem solving' of the teacher educators; eleven items represent 'Organization' of contents to be delivered; Twelve items for 'Communicational' aspects; Thirteen items for ascertaining their 'Self-efficacy;

Fifteen items for ascertaining their 'Inter-personal skills'; and Sixteen items represent their use of 'Technology'. The tool has been given to the experts in the field of teacher education for obtaining their opinion. Based on their opinion rewording and rephrasing have been done in the questionnaire wherever necessary and 28 statements were also discarded. Thus remaining eighty three statements were retained in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by the investigators with 35 teacher educators who handle M.Ed. programme from seven colleges of education affiliated to Teachers Education University, Tamil Nadu. The investigators also obtained the achievement marks of the M.Ed. students in the concerned subject taught by the respective teacher educators from the sample of seven colleges of education affiliated to Teachers Education University.

Result and Discussion

Based on the data collected for the respondents, their responses are tabulated, analysed and interpreted as follows:

Table 1 presents the distribution of components responsible for teacher educator efficiency on the components of Life skill education of the select colleges affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University. It can be seen from the table that 9.4% of teacher educators expressed their fair problem solving skill for the professional preparation; as many as 43% of teacher educators revealed that they are good at problem solving; 29% of them are very good at their problem solving; and 18% are found excellent in their problem solving. It is heartening to note that teacher educators are committed to plan for their successful preparation of educational practices.

Table 1: Responses of Teacher educators to TELSEQ

Components of Teacher Educators Life skill efficiency questionnaire	Teacher Educators' Response for the components				
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Problem solving	-	9.37%	42.8%	29.3%	18.3%
Organization	-	5.7%	47.1%	39.3%	7.9%
Communication	-	-	21.1%	32.6%	36.3%
Self-efficacy	-	11.2%	50.4%	31.0%	7.3%
Interpersonal skills	-	15.9%	62.2%	17.1%	4.7%
Technology	-	5.2%	57.1%	25.1%	12.4%

Quality processes tend to focus on 'core' aspects of education such as learning-teaching and course organization. For the items pertinent to 'Organization', as many as 47% of teacher educators responded 'good' and 39.3% revealed 'very good' in organizing their contents. Also 8% of them responded 'Excellent' in their organization.

Drawing from research on teacher effectiveness, it is learnt that if pre-service teachers are to be adequately prepared, they need concrete skills that will enable them to observe Communication, diagnose the need for Communicational strategies, and assess the effectiveness of strategy implementation. The result shows that 36.3% of teacher educators are excellent in their Communicational strategies and 32.6% are very good in motivating their students.

In fact, until recently, little attention was given by researches for teacher self-efficacy mainly because lack of tools to ascertain it. As it is conceived, teacher education is the mother of all the professions, the teacher educator must be accountable for his/her self-efficacy before he/she trains people. In that way self-efficacy is validated to be one of the components of teacher educator life skill efficiency. Effective interpersonal skills of teacher educators underpin professional practice. As known teacher educators reflect in trainees' behaviour, they have to play a key role in moulding a trainee in to a good individual leading to acquisition of right interpersonal skills. It is heartening to note that for about 85% of the teacher educators are found good in interpersonal skills. Technology is one of the important components in triangle of education. With the national reform and research agendas occurring in teacher education, one of the most important areas needing theoretical analysis and empirical research is Technology. In recognition of this demand, use of technology by teacher educators is taken cognizance of. It is found that for about 95% of teacher educators are committed in their use of technology.

The average marks of the M.Ed. students in the concerned subject of respective teacher educators were calculated and they are correlated with the scores obtained by Teacher Educator Life Skill Efficiency Questionnaire (TELSEQ). Karl Pearson product moment correlation method was used to find out the correlation coefficient and it was found to be 0.6231. Hence it is inferred that there is a moderate positive correlation between students' achievement and teacher educators' response for (TELSEQ). Therefore it is inferred that teacher educators were aware of the components of teaching competency such as Problem solving, Organisation, Communication, Self-efficacy, Interpersonal Skills and Technology and effective with special reference to the above mentioned components and they are efficient within the context of their life skill education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study the following recommendations were made:

- ❖ Attempt may be taken to improve teacher educator life skill efficiency by orienting in domain competencies such as professional competencies, research and innovation competencies, learning competencies and valuing competencies.

- ❖ Teacher educators must be given inputs to demonstrate an ability to transform content knowledge in to instruction.
- ❖ They must seek variety of information to use teaching methods that prompt thoughtful and responsible learning.
- ❖ Teacher educator attitudes and knowledge are the critical components of any theoretical competency model. Hence they must be motivated to develop life skills towards their professional preparation.
- ❖ Trainees must be given sufficient opportunities by the teacher educators to practice life skill education.

Conclusion

Life skills development approach is an integral part of all encompassing process of socialization that continues throughout the human life. Such skills will have the greatest pay-off if they are embedded in systems that also develop greater teacher educator competence through mentoring and coaching around the standards and through roles for teacher educators to help their colleagues and their institutions improve. In deed life skill education for teachers is crucial for developing psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills, and helps them in making informed decisions, problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication, building healthy relationships and managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner.

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