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A STUDY OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN PRIMARY TEACHERS COMPETENCY AND COMPETENCY IN PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Primary education gained priority in India ever since the goals for universalisation of Primary Education were laid in the 1950's. Thereafter, constant efforts were made to attain universalisation in the identified four areas: accessibility, enrolment, retention and achievement. Today, improvements are largely noticed in the areas of accessibility and enrolment, while more efforts are needed to enhance the retention rates and achievement level of students.

KEYWORDS: Primary Teacher, Competency

INTRODUCTION

An improvement of student achievement has emerged as the Nation's challenge in the recent few years and the competency of a teacher has been recognized as key factor in this aspect. This is because a teacher is one who has the maximum interaction with the students, knows about their dispositions and ensures that appropriate teaching learning activities are provided to attain the goals of education.

The Report of the Education Commission [1964-66] had also stated that "of all the different factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant."

A teacher being considered as a prime functionary is required to play a multidimensional role in order to attain the goals of education.

However, for the effective performance of these roles, a teacher is also required to possess the necessary knowledge, skill and attitudes, which together can be termed as competencies keeping in view, the various roles a teacher is expected to perform, the competencies required are large since they range from transaction of instruction to working with the community and others [NCTE, 1998]. A competency based programme of teacher education aims to develop the competencies among the teachers through a systematic and pragmatic approach.

The prevailing teacher education programme if compared with competency based teacher education programme, an existence of wide disparity becomes conspicuous.

Hence, it could be said that the primary education with its unattained targets and primary teacher education with its in appropriate approach.

To strengthen the existing education programme, it becomes very essential to determine the nature and extent of this discrepancy. Because, the extent of this discrepancy would indicate the extent of relevance of a teacher education programme and the areas where efforts for implement are needed.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Barr (1923) described, good teachers as compared with poor teachers to be more vigorous, more enthusiastic and happier, less attractive, more emotionally stable, more pleasant and sympathetic and displayed a better sense of humour.

Withal (1949) explained the class room climate by (i) teachers' dominative patterns produced more dislike in the students' for their teacher and resulted in the reduction of students' ability to recall, (ii) teachers' integrative patterns gained for them the students' liking and adoration resulting in students increased ability to recall.

Debnath (1971), tried to find out certain determinants of teaching efficiency. The variables that were studied are age, experiences, academic achievement and training. The findings revealed that professional training, intelligence, interest in teaching, friendliness, and democratic behaviors having relation with teaching efficiency.

Singh (1976), examined the relationship between certain personality variables and teaching effectiveness and could easily distinguish the superior, average and inferior teachers.

The following are the relevant studies related to Instructional process of Teaching-

A number of research efforts have been made to study process variables while instruction was under process. These efforts have been culminated in "instructional system". Each system has been developed on some theoretical frame work ensuring on order and a sequence in the instructional process.

Taba (1964), proposed a controlled patterns of teacher behavior for guiding class discussion which was consistent with her model of 'how children think'. Twenty elementary schoolteachers were trained to guide class discussion and learning activities in such a way that concepts at higher levels of abstraction in the field of social studies were not reinforced by the teacher until a large proportion of the class was ready for lifting the level of discourse. She holds to identify the particular teaching strategies required by particular types of learning goals, such as generating certain cognitive operations, stimulating certain types of enquiry and integrating certain bits of information into large concepts. Taba's teaching strategies consists of a series of sequential sub-units like focusing, extending thought on the same plane lifting thought to a higher plane and controlling thought. Thus, the classroom teacher is required to make quick and subtle judgments about the cognitive processes of pupils.

Relevant studies related to Interaction process of teaching are as follows-

Hankins (1975), emphasized to determine the degree to which, teachers in open-space classroom where make indirect and encouraging than direct and restricting in their behaviours, than teachers in traditional classrooms.

Flanders (1970) studied teacher's classroom's verbal interactions, with achievement and attributes measures, through matrices- analysis and suggested that effective teachers modify their teaching behaviour from one instructional situation to the other.

Maheswari (1976), made an attempt to explore the classroom verbal interaction patterns of effective and ineffective teachers. FIACS was employed for encoding and decoding the classroom verbal behaviour. The categories like, 'accepts feeling', 'praising', and 'initiation' were found with effective teachers, whereas, 'lecture', 'direction', and 'authority' categories were found with ineffective teachers.

Teaching in the instructional process studies has been dealt in criterion approach. In the different studies mentioned in instructional process, teaching has been considered as a highly mental activity, which does not seem to be in practice under natural situations.

The studies reviewed above under interaction process have made use of FIACS with different purposes. Indian researcher has almost accepted FIACS as standard model for effective teacher behaviour.

The pupils achievement can be taken very confidentially as a criterion for selecting effective teachers. This idea will be adopted in the present study for selecting effective teachers.

In the present study the naturalistic approach has been adopted to study teacher behaviours.

Structured of science, as any other subject has two characteristic,

(i) it has its own fund of acquired knowledge, and

(ii) a specialized method of enquiry of acquiring that knowledge. In this view, teaching of science is partly determined by the content structure and the processes, it involve acquiring that content.

To analyze the content and its processes of acquisition under naturalistic conditions of teaching science, an exploratory attempt will be made in the present study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the 'competencies expected' among primary school teachers through.

i). literature and document analysis.

ii) Curriculum analysis.

iii) Teacher educators' perception.

2. To identify the 'competencies in practice' among the primary school teachers through:

i) focus group interview.

ii) Teacher self-report

3. To study the discrepancy between the 'competencies expected' and 'competencies in practice' in terms of:

i) Frequency analysis.

ii) Priority rating towards their 'extent of requirement.

iii) Priority rating toward their 'extent of importance.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Since this research aims at studying the discrepancy between competencies expected and those in practice, the main hypotheses are those stated in terms of significance of difference. However, hypothesis of significance have been stated for competencies in practice. They are

i) A significant number of focus groups of teacher's state that the competencies listed are practiced by them.

ii) A significant proportion of teachers state that the competencies listed are practiced by them.

iii) There exists a significant difference between the priority rating of teacher educators and that of teachers towards the extent of requirement' of the identified competencies.

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