

A STUDY OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS AT HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to improve the professional performance of teachers by measuring the factors affecting the performance of teachers at higher level. The study was descriptive in nature. All the principals, teachers and students of degree and postgraduate colleges of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa constituted the population of study. Fifty selected colleges constituted the sample. One principal, two teachers and five students were included in the sample from each college. Thus the sample was 400 individuals i.e. 50 principals, 100 teachers and 250 students. Three questionnaires were prepared separately for principals, teachers and students. The data obtained was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by using statistical techniques as mean, standard deviation average rating and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The factor of subject mastery was perceived by the principals, teachers themselves and students to be at the highest level among the four factors of teachers' professional performance. The factor of attitude toward students was viewed to be at the lowest level. Among the four factors of teachers' professional performance teaching methodology and teachers' personal characteristics were factors considered to be present in teachers' performance at intermediary levels. Though, the factor of subject mastery of teachers' professional performance was found on the highest level in the present study, yet teachers should continue their attention and improve their command on the content through self study and by attending in service refresher courses.

Keywords: Performance, Subject Mastery, Professional

INTRODUCTION

Education is the training and instruction designed to give knowledge to children and young people in school and colleges. Education is the social instrument through which we can guide nation's destiny and shape its future (Panda, 1988). The purpose of education is not merely to contribute to the continuity of culture but also change peacefully and rationally the material foundations of civilization (Iqbal, 1986). The traditional goal of the culture is the preservation of the past and the present and the development of intellect (Arif, 2003). Education should help in improving the capabilities and skills of the students and introduce new ideas and values among them (Khalid, 1983). Education is the process

through which knowledge is transmitted from one individual or section of society to another individual or section.

The Govt, of Pakistan (1970) says that the teacher is the pivot of any education system, in fact teachers are the strength of a nation. Teachers continue to retain their influence and it is difficult to bypass them and the process of teaching learning. Importance of teachers is recognized throughout the world (Panda, 1998) good teachers are inessential for the effective functioning of education system and for improving the quality of learning process. Job statistician enables teachers to put their best to do the assigned word. However present reports, educational journals and the popular press about teachers stress and turn out indicate that teacher job satisfaction and moral merit increased attention.

The teachers should realize that it is not only necessary to be honest but one must make attempts to make other honest for a better society. On the other hand discussion induced most of the teachers to love honestly which is a hidden value for developing positive attitude towards the teaching profession (Reimers, 2003).

There are many factors that influence the teacher job performance such as aptitude, attitude, subject mastery, teaching methodology, personal characteristics, the classroom environment, general mental ability, personality, relations with students, preparation and planning, effectiveness in presenting, subject matters, relations with other staff, self improvement, relations with parents and community, poise, intellect, teaching techniques, interaction with students, teaching competence demonstrated. Motivational skills, fairness in grading and teacher's attitude toward the students, these factors described were selected by MacDonald, Swartz, Ferris, Jahangir and Riaz respectively.

Ferris (1998) measured teacher's job performance on seven performance dimensions. These were; a) Relations with students; b) Preparation and planning, e) Effectiveness in presenting subject matter; d) Relation with other staff; e) improvement; f) Relations with parents and community; g) Poise.

Competent teachers apply broad, deep and integrated sets of knowledge and skills as they plan for implement and revise instruction. Technology proficiency is but one dimension of teachers' competence (Siddiqui, 2004).

There are four categories in which method of teaching can be divided. They are teacher directed methods, student directed method, interactive methods and problem solving methods. If the teachers divert full attention to these methods and apply in their classes the results of their job performance can be improved.

There are many personal characteristics which a teacher should adopt to present a confident role image in the classroom atmosphere and also develop a relaxed style of communication in the classroom. Students respond well to teacher who smile readily and demonstrate ease and assurance in interpersonal communication. Demonstration of confidence on the part of a sender reflects sureness and authority and stimulates the attention of receivers. On the other hand, nervousness, hesitation or lack of confidence frequently creates unease or uncertainty in receivers. Admittedly, it is sometimes difficult for teachers to project an image of confidence and adopt a relaxed style of communication if the topic is difficult.

Objectives of Study

Objectives of study were: a) to measure and summarize the perceptions of principals about the factors that influence teacher's performance, b) to measure and summarize the perceptions of teachers themselves about the factors that influence their (teacher's) performance, c) to measure and summarize the perceptions of students about the factors that influence teacher's performance, d) to compare teacher's performance on each factor in the light of perceptions of principals, teachers themselves and students, e) to determine the rating of principals, teachers themselves and their students on each factor, f) to discover the level of presence of each factor on teacher job performance in the light of perception of principals, teachers themselves and students and to recommend improvement of the existing situation.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Factors Affecting the Professional Performance of Teachers

The factors affecting the performance of teachers are of two types, the external factors and the internal factors. There are many external factors effecting how a teacher makes discussion in the classroom. While it is difficult to attach any order of significance to these factors, because every teacher is different, they will include to some degree, the expectations of the community, the particular school system in which the teacher is employed, the school itself the grade policies, the parents and the students. Many of the expectations from these external factors will appear conflicting and it is the Classroom teacher who must weld these into a workable framework while h integrating a range of internal factors. The individual teacher's beliefs about how children learn most effectively, how to teach in particular discipline or key learning area. The match between in individual teacher's beliefs about best teaching practice and whether they can personally meet these demands in the classroom is crucial. A teachers own preferred ways of thinking, acting and seeing the world, learners and learning will also be affected by the availability of resources both human and physical (Hasan, 2004).

Factors that have impact on student learning are the knowledge, aptitudes, Attitudes, and values with which students leave school or a particular teacher's classroom. The knowledge, skills, aptitudes, attitudes and values students possess upon entry are the result of some intricate and complex combination of their genetic composition and their home background. to complicate matters further, early difference among children are often magnified by their parents, decisions concerning the schools the children will attend and teachers, and parents, decisions as to the programmes within these schools in which they will be placed. As we investigate and attempt to understand teacher effectiveness, then, we must take into consideration not only where the students are going.

Effectiveness of a particular teacher depend to a greater or lesser extent on goals being pursued and the students being taught, but teachers themselves differ Like their students, teachers differ in terms of the knowledge. Skills, aptitudes, and values they bring to their classrooms. They also differ in their teaching experience (Abrami et. al, 1999).

Attitude

Attitudes are habitual ways of reacting to situations. The term 'attitude' is generally reserved for an opinion which represents a person's overall inclination towards an object, idea or institution. Attitudes can be positive, negative or neutral can be dormant. And are more generalized and may not function at all.

The attitude of the teacher toward teaching is an important variable. Teachers have different opinions, as some believe that children should be seen. Not heard But others want to encourage children to feel that the teacher is a friend. The primary attribute of a good teacher is the ability to create a warm, friendly atmosphere in the classroom. Teaching should be geared to the needs of the child. '[he teacher must have a positive attitude toward teaching. lie must have sympathetic attitudes toward deviant children. the teacher must try to locate the causes of antisocial behavior and help the children to improve their personality.

Subject Mastery

Competent teachers apply broad, deep, and integrated sets of 'knowledge and skills as they plan for, implement, and revise instruction. Technology proficiency is but one dimension of teacher competence (Siddiqui, 2004).

Underlying these categories is teachers' personal characteristics: what they believe about school subjects and how they are best taught, and how are they trained. As all these characteristics influence the delivery of curricula, they allow insight into the types of alignment that exist between teacher training, practice and national curriculum objectives. Coupled with achievement data, they will help

identify the best towards the delivery of challenging curricula to students throughout the system (Rana, 1978).

Thorough understanding of the subject requires a depth study of all aspects of the subject from a variety of perspectives, to think of ideas and information, to enrich classroom situation, of various ways of presenting and explaining material to students and show students how various concepts and facts throughout the course relate to each other.

The teacher should select such course which he has been teaching for several years so that he could enrich and update his understanding of the subject. Those who not experienced, they may select the course which is of more interest to them to in still confidence in and control over teaching plan and activities, if the teachers follow this step the students quickly sense how prepared and enthusiastic the teacher is in his course. The teacher should first divide himself the course into major elements by breaking them into major divisions so the division of the course starts with the teacher's current understanding of the course.

Teaching Methodology

There are four categories into which methods of teaching can be divided. These are; teacher directed methods, student directed methods, inter active methods and Problem solving method.

Personal Characteristics

There are many personal characteristics adopt the teachers Present a confluent in the classroom atmosphere. From them one is to present a confident role image and develop a relaxed style of communication in the classroom. Students respond well to teachers who smile readily and demonstrate ease and assurance in interpersonal communication. Demonstration of confidence on the part of a sender reflects sureness and authority and stimulates the attention of receivers. On the other hand nervousness, hesitation, or lack of confidence frequently creates unease or uncertainty in receivers. Admittedly, it is sometimes difficult for teachers to project an image of confidence and adopt a relaxed style of communication if the topic. In such situations nervousness can often be overcome by demonstrating special enthusiasm for the subject matter being taught.

The second personal characteristic of the teacher is to talk the students in a language they understand. Students appreciate teachers who use ordinary language and avoid technical jargon. Teacher should use appropriate verbal, diagrammatic or symbolic forms, as demanded by the subject discipline, in the ways that are familiar to their classes. Skilled teachers interpret subject matter using ordinary language to make sure that messages are understood. They avoid the use of technical language except when it is absolutely necessary to do. When technical language, except when it is absolutely necessary to do so. When technical terms are used they should be introduced systematically and a teacher should always ensure that new and unfamiliar terms are clearly explained.

It should be the characteristics of every teacher to explain key concepts and vocabulary and give precise directions to students. Students are often confused by teachers who use vocabulary in imprecise ways or give hurried or incomplete directions. Teachers can avoid the possibility of ambiguity by giving special attention to the precise encoding of essential messages. Key vocabulary should be explained. Directions should be clearly and precisely stated so that students understand exactly what they are required to do. Ambiguous directions almost always lead to confusion and uncertainty. If several directions need to be given, it is good practice to deliver these one at a time. This is particularly true when dealing with students who have difficulty in grasping basic concepts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population

All the principals, teachers and students of degree and post graduate colleges of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa constituted the population of study.

Delimitation of the Study

The present study was delimited to four factors only as subject mastery, teaching methodology, attitude towards students, and personal characteristics.

Sample

Fifty selected colleges constituted the sample. One principal, two teachers and five students were included in the sample from each college. Thus the sample was 400 individuals i.e. 50 principals, 100 teachers and 250 students. Three questionnaires were prepared separately for principals, teachers and students.

Research Instrument

After a thorough review of the techniques of test construction and related units of English, the researcher constructed three questionnaires separately for principals, teachers and students.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by using statistical techniques as mean, standard deviation average rating and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that the factor subject mastery was at the top level and the attitude towards the students was at the bottom level. The results computed by one way analysis of variance showed that these four factors; attitude toward students, subject mastery, teaching methodology and personal characteristics had over all significant and non-significant differences. The three factors of attitude toward students, subject mastery and teaching methodology had none significant differences, but the fourth factor of the personal characteristics had significant difference. The average ratings showed some relationship among the four factors of teachers' professional performance.

The view of students selected in sample demonstrated that their teachers presented the subject matter of the lessons with keen interest but their attention toward the students in the class environment was poor. Thus, the teachers should divert full attention toward the students to make teaching learning process a joint venture.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of statistical analysis and the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The factor of subject mastery was perceived by the principals, teachers themselves and students to be at the highest level among the four factors of teachers' job performance. The factor of attitude toward students was viewed to be at the lowest level. Among the four factors of teachers' professional performance teaching methodology and teachers' personal characteristics were factors considered to be present in teacher performance at intermediary levels.
2. The average rating of teachers was the highest whereas that of students was the lowest on all the four factors, namely the attitude toward students, subject mastery, teaching methodology and personal characteristics of teachers' professional performance. The rating of the principals was at intermediary level.
3. There was no significant difference among the views of principals, teachers themselves and students about teachers' performance on the factors of attitude toward students, subject mastery and teaching methodology. However, the mean views of principals, teachers themselves and students were found different on the factor of teachers' personal characteristics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Though, the factor of subject mastery of teachers' professional performance was found on the highest level in the present study, yet teachers may continue their attention and improve their command on the content through self study and by attending in service refresher courses.
2. The attitude toward students, the fourth factor of teachers' professional performance as analyzed in the study, was perceived to be at the lowest; so, teachers need to improve their attention towards the students, in order to improve their professional performance.
3. The present research also suggests teachers to improve their teaching methodology by consulting internet media, new informatory literature to bring innovation in their teaching methodology.
4. The factor of personal characteristics of teachers' professional performance was given the third position among the four factors, thus, teachers should give specific attention toward this factor by improving their personality characteristics such a use of ordinary language, removal of potential blocks of communication, use of key vocabulary, use of different channels of communication to facilitate the students and also speak clearly and vary the tone pitch and inflection of the voice to all areas of the classroom
5. In the light of above mentioned conclusions, it can be suggested that if teacher improve their performances on the four factors; attitude toward students, subject mastery, teaching methodology and personal characteristics, a significant improvement can be made in teachers' professional performance and teaching expertise.

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