



Use of Soft Skill in teacher Education Colleges by teacher trainees

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Abstract:

Teachers play a pivotal role in developing the future generations. Therefore they have to be properly guided to enhance their competencies. Effectiveness and importance of teacher training programs is to elevate and improve teacher's professional abilities in teaching. The purpose of this paper is to identify how training and development program impact teachers towards developing their soft skills. This paper has reviewed the training and development program among teachers by taking into consideration the soft skills namely problem solving skills, communication skills, decision making skills, negotiation skills and leadership skills of the teachers through systematic review of existing literature review. The research has also developed a framework and set of proposition that represents the impact of training by development programs among teachers to develop the soft skills.

Keywords: *Communication skills, problem solving skills, leadership skills, decision making skills, negotiation skills.*

1. Introduction

Ramsden (2003) claimed that education plays a significant role in developing and shaping the economic and social development for nations in a competitive world. In knowledge-based economics, governments would view universities as a platform for change in the society and expanding prosperity. Therefore there is necessity for highly skillful and trained graduates in nations to plan and execute thoughtful plans for improving the teaching quality in the education as mentioned in Little et al, (2007). Teaching skills would entail giving practice and training in various approaches, strategies and techniques that would assist the teachers to impart and plan instruction, give suitable reinforcement and carry out effective and efficient assessment. It encompasses effective skills for managing the class, use and preparation of instruction materials skills. Pedagogical theory encompasses the sociological, psychological and philosophical aspect that would allow the teachers to possess a strong basis for practising the skills needed to teach in the classroom. Professional skills encompass the strategies, approaches and techniques that would assist teachers to develop their career and career growth. It encompasses counseling skills, soft skills, computer skills, information retrieving & management skills, interpersonal skills and life-long learning skills. Combination of pedagogical theory, teaching skills and professional skills would serve to develop the right attitude, skills and knowledge in teachers to promote holistic development. Education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living and both consider communication vital to successful learning. Communication has many meanings and has been defined with various different models. Communication is both receptive and expressive. Teachers must be skilled at listening to their students as well as explaining things clearly. Teachers need clarity of thought to present the material. Hunt (1987) referred to it as the process of people sending and receiving information. He conceptualized the communication model as involving a speaker, speech, listeners, and feedback. To ensure that teaching and learning represent the two sides of a single coin or the two sides of any given class is, and always has been, education's main objective. The possibility of organizing teaching in such a way as to foster better learning has been one of the main premises of education since Comenius (1592-1604). However, when dealing with the organization and execution of such teaching in classrooms we find teachers who may or may not have the skills necessary to communicate with their students, skills that can facilitate or preclude fulfillment

of the teaching proposal. Communication is both receptive and expressive. Teachers must be skilled at listening to their students as well as explaining things clearly. Teachers need clarity of thought to present the material. They must be able to break down complex ideas into simpler parts and smaller steps to transmit to their students. They must be able to adapt their methods of communication to all students regardless of ability or learning style. They are able to "read" their students and adapt to the needs of the individual. Effective communication includes transforming the boring into the interesting and having good presentation skills.

2. Meaning of Communication

Communication refers to the exchange of thoughts and ideas with the intention of conveying information. Communication can be defined as sharing of thoughts, information and intelligence. All the activities that a person performs when he wishes to convey his message to others are nothing but the ways to achieve communication. The effective ways of communication are clarity of message, completeness of message, individual's facial expressions, eye contact, body postures, and external physical appearance

3. Need for Communication

The need for communication arises due to the need to express. None of us can live with bottled up feelings. Thus, the basic need to communicate arises, so that one can express. The same logic applies at every workplace, organization or any other place. The need for communication and the ability to communicate helps in developing efficient management, organizational skills, laying down plans, establishing a healthy work culture and resolving impending issues. Teaching profession demands good communication skill, along with the knowledge of the subject. If they are unable to teach what they know, students tend to be less involved and lose inspiration to learn. They should be motivated to speak up their viewpoints in class and raise questions, if they are unable to grab certain topic. For this, it is vital for the teachers to communicate effectively with them

4. Importance of Communication Skills for Teachers

The importance of communication skills cannot be underestimated. Good communication skills are necessary in all walks of life. The lack of effective communication skills has a negative impact on the personal as well as professional life of a person. Teaching is generally considered as only fifty percent knowledge and fifty percent interpersonal or communication skills. For a teacher, it is not just important to give a quality lecture but it is more important for the presentation of a lesson or lecture in class. Communication skills for teachers are thus as important as their in-depth knowledge of the particular subject which teaches. Teachers should be aware of the importance of communication skills in teaching.

5. Effective Communication Skills for Teachers

Following are some of the communication skills that a teacher must possess so that they interact properly with the students;

1. Positive Motivation

This is one of the important things that a teacher must possess. In a class, students always have different kinds of taste and preferences over subjects. So it is the job of the teacher to create enthusiasm and interest in the minds of the students towards a subject. It is also a teachers role to remove any fear and inhibitions that a student may have towards a subject.

2. Effective Body Language

This is the most powerful communication skill that a teacher must possess. Good presentation skills include a powerful body language supported by verbal skills. This can create a long lasting impression in the minds of the students. Thus, a teacher's lecture will inevitably become more interactive and

interesting for the students. Besides, a teacher should maintain the volume, tone and rhythm of their voice during a lecture

3. Sense of Humor

The importance of this factor has been regularly underestimated. A good sense of humor keeps the students active and interested in the teachers class. A teacher who is dour and lacks humor doesn't contribute to the overall well being of the students.

4. Understanding the Students

Teachers should encourage students to communicate openly. There should be emphasis on cultivating a dialogue rather than a monologue. So while solving any kind of problems in the classroom, it is always wise to hear the opinions of the students also.

6. Types of Communication

Based on Communication Channels

Based on the channels used for communicating, the process of communication can be broadly classified as verbal communication and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication includes written and oral communication whereas the non-verbal communication includes body language, facial expressions and visual diagrams or pictures used for communication.

6.1 Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is further divided into written and oral communication. The oral communication refers to the spoken words in the communication process. Oral communication can either be face-to-face communication or a conversation over the phone or on the voice chat over the Internet. Spoken conversations or dialogs are influenced by voice modulation, pitch, volume and even the speed and clarity of speaking.

6.2 Nonverbal Communication

Non-verbal communication includes the overall body language of the person who is speaking, which will include the body posture, the hand gestures, and overall body movements. The facial expressions also play a major role while communicating since the expressions on a person's face say a lot about his/her mood. On the other hand gestures like a handshake, a smile or a hug can independently convey emotions. Non verbal communication can also be in the form of pictorial representations, signboards, or even photographs, sketches and paintings.

6.3 Formal Communication

Formal communication includes all the instances where communication has to occur in a set formal format. Typically this can include all sorts of business communication or corporate communication. The style of communication in this form is very formal and official. Official conferences, meetings and written memos and corporate letters are used for communication. Formal communication can also occur between two strangers when they meet for the first time. Hence formal communication is straightforward, official and always precise and has a stringent and rigid tone to it.

7. Communication Channel

A communication channel is a type of media that is used to transfer a message from one person to another. In business specifically, communication channels are the way information flows in the organization within, and with other companies.

7.1 Importance of a Communication Channel

Importance of a Communication Channel Communication channels affect how inefficient or efficient the flow of information is within a company. This lack of communication could cause employees to lack the knowledge of what the company expects of them, leaving them uninformed. Also without an

effective communication channel, employees lose focus on the big picture and lose their company mind, which goes on to affects their decision making and productivity in the workplace. This harms the overall organizational objectives as well. For an organization to be run effectively, a good manager should be able to communicate to their employees what is expected of them, make sure they are fully aware of company policies and any upcoming changes. Communication channels should be included by managers to enhance the productivity of their workers and to also ensure the well being and smooth running of their company.

7.2 Types of Communication

The number of communication channels available to a manager has increased over the last 20 odd years. Video conferencing, mobile technology, electronic bulletin boards and fax machines are some of the new possibilities. With technology advancing, the number of communication channels has significantly increased over the past few years. Many new types of channels exist today including video conferencing, mobile technology, electronic bulletin boards and also fax machines. As time progresses so many more channels will be introduced and implemented within the work place. These new types of channels help organizations communicate with the several workers to ensure their message has been sent. Choosing the type of communication channel is very important, these channels are grouped into three main categories: formal, informal and unofficial.

7.2.1 Formal Communication Channels

- Sends information including goals, policies and procedures of an organization
- Messages follow a chain of command
- Flows from managers to their subordinates
- Examples include business plan, customer satisfaction survey, annual reports, employer's manual, review meetings.

7.2.2 Unofficial Communication Channels

- Sometimes communication that takes place in an organization are interpersonal.
- Talks of sports, politics and TV shows are seen between co-workers.
- The unofficial communication channel in an company is the company's 'grapevine.' It is this that cause rumors.
- 'Grapevine' discussions often form groups, which translate into friendships outside of the organization.

8. Conclusion

The procedure of communication is dynamic concept and not a stationary. It takes presence of mind and courage to face people with the power to prove what we want to convey through communication. A communication can be said successful only if we are able to convince people for whatever we wanted to convey. Depending on the environment and circumstances the effectiveness of speech changes. It is therefore a dynamic interaction both affecting and being affected by many variables. It is a basic social process required for the growth and development of individuals, groups, society and people. Knowing good communication skills are really important in every walk of life.

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