

Identification of University Teachers Competencies as Perceived by the Students

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ABSTRACT

The competency of University teachers was determined from 225 students of the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. The students were interviewed to find out their views regarding the competence being possessed by the teachers and suggestions for its enhancement. The students were well aware of the components needed and those possessed by their teachers. They suggested that the teachers must not only possess latest knowledge, but also be sympathetic, regular, punctual, friendly and free from any prejudice.

Key Words: Competencies; Satisfaction; Subject matter; Professional training

INTRODUCTION

The importance of a teacher in an educational system cannot be stressed too far both from the students and national points of view. One supreme task of promoting national ideal and building up national character of strong foundation falls. According to Kakkar (2001) the teacher of today is not a mere purveyor of lessons in a classroom. He is instead an individual who is of course not only interested in children acquire knowledge and skills but also equally involved in his total development.

Keeping in view the importance of a teacher more than that mentioned above, an ideal teacher is expected to possess some attributes like proficiency in the subject, moral health, physical and mental fitness, professional training and devotion to the profession so that he may have an exemplary personality and outlook for the students.

Rauf (1993) states that proficiency in the subject; physical fitness and moral health of the teacher have been identified as the most important qualifications in addition to the professional training. That is why an utmost effort is made to select such persons as teachers who are fully competent for the performance of duties as teacher. In this regard Sorenson (1984) was of the view that all teachers at all levels should be strongly competent in the subjects they teach and must have sound body of knowledge about the students' physiology and psychology. Shahid (1998), while presenting Islamic point of view states that the teacher has to follow the role and sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) for being an effective teacher because the teaching is blessing and privilege in the Islamic society.

In the light of above mentioned deliberations, it goes without saying that in addition to mastery of subject matter, sufficient professional training is also required to communicate information and knowledge to the students effectively. Crow and Crow (1991) have placed increasing emphasis upon the basic areas of competence which include mastery of subject matter, understanding of human nature,

interest in continued professional improvement, knowledge of availability to apply the principles of teaching etc.

In this regard, Trabue (1993) suggested that real reward of true teacher lies in the deep satisfaction, he feels in watching students grow in their understanding of themselves and of their world, in seeing them develop self reliance, initiative and sense of responsibility and at observing their learning of facts, skills, habits and attitudes that are involved in becoming constructive citizens in a modern world.

Now, it becomes clear that keeping mastery of subject aside, the professional training is must to handle students and maintain proper discipline through effective teaching-learning skills. However, in developing countries particularly in Pakistan this important aspect is given least consideration while considering competencies required for University teachers.

Thereby, a survey was conducted to determine the views of selected students of the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad with regard to the teachers' effectiveness and competencies.

METHODOLOGY

In order to determine the extent to which the University teachers were competent in the performance of their duties, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad acted as universe and 225 randomly selected B.Sc. and M.Sc. students were taken as respondents. The data collected with the help of interview schedule were interpreted to draw conclusions and suggest recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I depicts that a majority of the students were well aware of the characteristics being possessed by a competent teacher. It was revealed that 89.33, 86.22, 84.44% of the respondents considered mastery of subject

Table I. Opinion of respondents regarding the nature of competency of teachers

Characteristics	No. of respondent	Percentage
Mastery of subject matter	201	89.33
Competency in teaching methodology	190	84.44
Ability to understand human nature	123	54.66
Confidence and emotional stability	165	73.33
Impartiality	176	78.22
Pleasant personality	194	86.22
Physical and mental health	167	74.22

Table II. Distribution of respondents regarding the satisfaction of students by the teacher's performance

Characteristics	No. of respondent	Percentage
Mastery of subject matter	105	46.66
Competency in teaching methodology	67	29.77
Ability to understand human nature	85	37.77
Confidence and emotional stability	91	40.44
Impartiality	59	26.22
Pleasant personality	102	45.33
Physical and mental health	121	53.77

Table III. Suggestions for the improvement of teacher's competencies

Characteristics	No. of respondent	Percentage
Equipped with the latest knowledge	21	94.22
Professional training in teaching methodology and psychology	204	90.66
Avoidance of authoritarian behavior	189	84.00
Avoidance of all types of favoritism and nepotism	177	78.66
Sympathetic, compassion and open mindedness	138	61.33
Regularity and punctuality in taking classes	92	40.88
Motivating and pleasant mode of instruction	97	43.11

matter, pleasant personality and competency in teaching technology as the most important characteristics respectively. These were followed by impartiality, physical and mental health, confidence and emotional stability and ability to understand human nature.

Table II indicates the views of the respondents regarding the components of competences being possessed by their teachers. In this regard, 53.77, 46.66, 45.33 and 40.44% of the respondents pointed out the characteristics of physical and mental health, mastery of subject matter,

pleasant personality, confidence and emotional stability as essential pre-requisites for the teachers. Whereas other attributes like teaching methodology, ability to understand human nature, and impartiality were acknowledged by less than 40 percent of respondents.

Table-III deals with the suggestions of respondents for enhancing the competence of teachers. A large majority of 94.22, 90.66 and 84% of the respondents preferred their teachers to be equipped with the latest knowledge, professional training in teaching technology and avoidance of authoritarian behavior. Other suggestions presented by a reasonable percentage of respondents include avoidance of all types of favoritism, sympathy and compassion, regularity and punctuality in taking classes, motivating and pleasant mode of instruction.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

As the result of survey, it was revealed that a majority of respondents were well aware of the attributes of a good teacher. However, most of them were not satisfied with regard to the possession of qualities like competencies in subject matter, teaching techniques, understanding of human psychology and behavior free from all types of prejudice.

In the circumstances, it is recommended that short term teachers training programme be made compulsory for all the University teachers especially the fresh entrants. It must contain aspects like teaching methodology, educational psychology, use of audio-visual aids, evaluation techniques etc.

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(Received 01 June 2003; Accepted 12 September 2003)