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A study on learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers

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Abstract

The role of 21st century teacher has become very challenging, complex and multi-faceted on account of many factors which are not limited to new updates and changes in content areas of all disciplines-humanities, sciences and social sciences. The present teacher is expected to be updated and conscious of various explosion-explosion of knowledge explosion of population, explosion of frustration, explosion of expectations and explosion of technology, etc. The quality of education depends upon various improvements. Education develops the individual like a flower, which distributes its fragrance all over the environment. In this sense education is that constructive process which drags a person out from darkness, poverty and misery and leads him on to the paths of enlightenment, prosperity and happiness by developing his individuality in all its aspects. Elementary school encompasses a wide range of grade levels. Elementary school teachers usually have one class and they teach their students several different subjects. Computers play a major role in the current education status. The role of computers along with various other factors have been analyzed. The possession of computers play a significant role in learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers.

Keywords: Computer, teacher, learning style, teaching competency, education

1. Introduction

"Education is the manifestation of the divine perfection already existing in man." This view states that education is the complete exposition of one's individuality. Every perfect human being desires to live a successful life. If life has to be successful, the skills and the ability to conveniently solve the problems of life have to be acquired. In trying to realize this successful life he would be facing many problems. He needs certain type and amount of knowledge, skills, attitudinal framework and behaviors, which are necessary to solve his problems of life and realize the successful and complete life. Thus desirable amount of knowledge, skill and attitudinal behavior are developed by the means of education. True education is that which draws out and stimulate the spiritual, intellectual and physical facilities of children. It is only possible when there are competent teachers in educational institutions. The teachers must possess a good learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers. Teaching is a complex set of attitudes, knowledge, skills, motivation and values. It requires the thorough knowledge of subject matter, familiarity with methods of teaching, teaching aptitude, favorable attitude towards teaching, interest in teaching, etc. Students in elementary schools are all at different phases of development, and their needs vary greatly. However, most elementary school teachers focus on a specific grade level, teaching one class of students who are around the same age. In fact, some states require teachers to be certified to teach a particular grade. Aggarwaj (1995) ^[1] while defining education as "the influence of the environment on the individual with a view to producing a permanent change in his habit of behaviour, thought and attitude" laid the foundation of teaching as a process to bring about the desired and predetermined behavioral change in a rather formal and direct manner. Bosman & Schulze (2018) ^[2] defined teaching as interactive process. He further described interaction as "Participation of both teacher and student". Hence teaching plays an important role for developing nation. Cho (2012) ^[3] on emphasizing quality of teachers said that "No system of education, not syllabus, not methodology, not textbooks can rise above the level of its teachers if a country wants to have quality education it must have quality teachers."

2. Learning style

Learning occupies very important role in the Field of education. We want to educate the students and it is only learning which education is. In order to develop presentation and communication techniques that facilitate effective learning, a teacher must have some notions how pupils learn. Learning means change in behavior or behavior potential that occurs as a result of experience. Learning can result from both vicarious and direct experiences. Vicarious means observing someone and learning from that observation and not being directly involved in the experience. For example, a child learns how to clap hands by seeing someone else do it. Learning also takes place through direct experiences. For example, a child learns to write by practicing writing. A child normally learns from his parents, teachers and the environment. A learning style is the way in which an individual learner tries to learn. The learning style is the manner in which a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment. The concept learning style refers to how individuals prefer to learn and different ways in which individuals process information in the course of learning. Learning styles are various approaches or ways of learning. They involve educating methods, particular to an individual that are presumed to allow that individual to learn best. Individuals perceive and process information in very different ways. Most people prefer an identifiable method of interacting with, taking in, and processing stimuli or information. Different teaching methods, test formats and assignments are better suited to some styles than to others. Students generally do better on an assignment when it matches their preferred style of thinking and learning.

3. Teaching competency

Every teacher is expected to perform a miracle which helps in shaping millions of learners to become worthy citizens of the world. Competence is usually understood as quality performance. A competency is a pattern of thinking feeling. Acting or speaking that causes a person to be successful in a specific job or role. Teacher competencies can be classified into three ways i.e. management functions, instructional functions, and classroom interaction function. Teaching competencies may be classified into general and specific. Cognitive-based teaching competencies, performance-based teaching competencies, consequences-based teaching competencies, explorative competencies, managerial teaching competencies, soft skills competencies are different types of teaching competencies.

Subject competency, content organization and presentation, instructional strategy, interactive competency, classroom management are some components of teaching competency which need to be effective for a successful elementary school teacher.

The objective of preparing teachers for universal elementary education and expanded secondary education should focus on the acquisition of competencies and the nurturing of the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural qualities and dimensions of teachers so that they become instruments of a new social order based on social justice and equity. A competent teacher will have to acquire the following characteristic. They should love what they do, possess good communication, be admirable, and should have positive reinforcement. They must be fair and just, have leadership quality and be committed. They should be understanding,

compassionate and caring. They should be more self-confident. They should be professional and be prepared always to face any sort of problem.

4. Statement of the Problem

The present study aimed at finding the relationship between learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers.

5. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out the level of learning style and Teaching Competency of the elementary school teachers in Tirunelveli District.

1. To find out the level of learning style of elementary school teachers with respect to background variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, teaching experience, location of school, type of school, monthly income, reading newspaper, computer facility in home and using internet for teaching.
2. To find out of the level of teaching competency of elementary school teachers with respect to background variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, teaching experience, location of school, type of school, monthly income, reading newspaper, computer facility in home and using internet for teaching.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference in learning style of elementary school teachers with respect to background variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, teaching experience, location of school, type of school, monthly income, reading newspaper, computer facility in home and using internet for teaching.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference in teaching competency of elementary school teachers with respect to background variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, teaching experience, location of school, type of school, monthly income, reading newspaper, computer facility in home and using internet for teaching.
5. To find out whether there is any significant relationship between learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers.

6. Research Methodology

The method adopted for the present study was determined by considering the nature of the problem, the kind of data required for its solution and the objectives of the study. The purpose of the study is to find out the level of learning style and Teaching Competency of the elementary school teachers in Tirunelveli District. They can be gathered by employing the survey method to achieve the purpose of the study. So, the investigator adopted the survey method for the study.

7. Population for the Study

The population for the study includes all the elementary school teachers working in Government, Aided and self-financed schools of Sivagiri Taluk of Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu.

8. Methods of data analysis

We used simple random sampling technique for selecting a sample of 200 elementary school teachers from 15 elementary schools in Sivagiri Taluk, Tirunelveli District.

For proper analysis, there must be a familiarity with the background of survey and with all its stages. Then the hypotheses should be formulated and tested. The percentage analysis, ‘t’ test, Anova, Scheffe, chi-square and correlation analysis were executed in this investigation. It is a pre requisite of any successful research, for it enables researchers to get rid of vague approaches and meaningless interpretations. The statistics is computed from a survey or a test result and is analysed to determine if it falls within a present acceptance

region. If it does, the null hypothesis is accepted otherwise rejected. The investigator fixed 5% level of significance for the present study.

9. Result

9.1 Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference in teaching competency of elementary school teachers with regard to Computer facility in Home.

Table 1: Difference in teaching competency of elementary school teachers with regard to Computer facility in Home

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t - value	Remarks at 5% level of significance
Teaching Competency	Yes	59	146.08	21.614	2.133	S
	No	141	139.01	21.318		

(Table value for df198 at 0.05 level is 1.97, NS – Not Significant)

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated ‘t’ value (2.133) is greater than the table value (1.97) for df 198 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference in teaching competency of elementary school teachers with regard to computer facility in home.

While comparing the mean scores of Yes (146.08) and No

(139.01), the elementary school teachers who have computer facility in home have better teaching competency than the teachers who don’t have computer facility in home.

9.2 Hypothesis two

There is significant relationship between Learning style and Teaching Competency of elementary school teachers.

Table 2: Relationship between learning style and teaching competency of elementary school teachers

Learning style				$\sum XY$	Calculated ‘r’ value	Remarks
$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$			
28894	4254686	28219	4074363	4128137	0.594	S

(Table value of ‘r’ is 0.138, NS – Not Significant)

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated ‘r’ value 0.594) is greater than the table value (0.138), at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is significant relationship between Learning style and Teaching Competency of elementary school teachers

10. Findings

- 10.2% of the elementary school teachers who are having computer facility in home have low, 69.5% of them have moderate and 20.3% of them have high level of learning style.
- 11.3% of the elementary school teachers who are not having computer facility in home have low, 81.6% of them have moderate, and 7.1% of them have high level of learning style.
- There is significant difference in teaching competency of elementary school teachers with regard to computer facility in home. The mean scores show that the elementary school teachers who have computer facility in home have better teaching competency than the teachers who don’t have computer facility in home.
- There is significant relationship between Learning style and Teaching Competency of elementary school teachers.

11. Conclusion

As the learning style and teaching competency are found to be moderate, it is necessary to find the ways to improve among the elementary teachers. The elementary teachers who have the computer facility in home have better teaching competency. So the school authorities and government should provide computer facilities to the poor and

economically weaker teachers to improve their teaching competency. Information and Communication Technology tools should be used by teachers to facilitate and enhance interactive teaching. By this the teaching competency of the teachers may be enriched.

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