

ROLE OF PEDAGOGY, CONTENT & PSYCHOLOGY TO INCREASE THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF TEACHERS IN SOCIETY

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Paper Received On: 21 FEB 2022

Peer Reviewed On: 28 FEB 2022

Published On: 1 MAR 2022

Abstract

The term 'pedagogy' is widely used but its true essence and scope are not understood clearly. A teacher who can understand the cumulative effect of pedagogy, content, and psychology will be able to decide learning objectives better and the teaching-learning process will be enriched. The teaching profession is multidimensional and the teacher is expected to know the scope of the subject and curriculum. Presentation of Learning (POL) is as important as it includes models, methods, innovation, strategy, and tactics to make the whole process smoother and more effective. The status of teachers needs to be uplifted for which a few policy reforms will also be needed to be brought in. This combination is essential to direct learning in a positive direction and help the learner achieve the best he can.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Teaching-learning, Teaching profession, Content, Psychology, Policy Reforms, Learning Objectives, Inspiration & Aspiration, Motivation, Textbook Analysis, Curriculum, Instructional Objectives, Presentation of Learning, Guided Learning



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Introduction

The teaching profession in today's time needs an overhaul as with the massive boom in technology, information is available at the press of a button and the role of a teacher has undergone a 360-degree transformation. The kind of honour and respect they got in earlier days is suddenly diminishing. They are not able to understand the coherence between pedagogy, content, and psychology to make learning more effective and permanent. The teaching professionals need to upgrade their skill set and get a thorough hang of modern pedagogical approaches to connect with different kinds of learners. According to Pritchard & Woollard

(2010), pedagogy is “the heart of teaching. It is the rules and principles that guide effective and efficient activities which lead to learning.”

The trio of pedagogy, content & psychology has come to the forefront even more during this pandemic period and it is essential to understand its confluence in this age of blended learning. The teachers today need to be hands-on, need to be convergent thinkers, and make decisions at the drop of a hat. They should be critical thinkers who can extrapolate and understand the minor nuances of the topic they are delivering. The earlier pedagogical models were incapable of doing so. They were less flexible and lacked the dynamism which is needed in today’s time. Learning and styles of learning have undergone a metamorphic change and apart from content, the learner’s psychology has become the centre of it all.

The major onus lies on the personnel, but also the system has failed the teaching community to a great extent. Problems like red-tapism, unfair monetary practices, unregulated privatization, and lack of additional perks plus other shortfalls plague the education system. Hence, it is evident that the quality of teachers being produced is not up to the mark and suitable for the current times. The extrinsic motivation is dying as there is nothing to look forward to for a teacher. The status of a teacher in society is slowly and steadily declining and people are looking towards technology as a teacher in the modern-day. If the country needs a competent and highly driven workforce in the education sector, it must address all the core problems at the earliest. Somehow at the outset, a situation of ‘Status Quo’ seems to have set in.

Objectives

1. To understand the minor aspects of the teaching profession and what it demands.
2. To understand what is pedagogy and its components, steps, and scope.
3. To know what is the relevance of content and its exact scope.
4. To know what is psychology and its need in the teaching profession.
5. To understand how pedagogy, psychology, and content go hand in hand.

Concepts

Pedagogy is a term that has been around for a long time now, but its in-depth understanding has become extremely relevant in today’s day and age. Let’s just briefly discuss its meaning and move ahead to understand the crux that every teaching professional needs to understand.

Pedagogy is the study of how learning happens. It is like an umbrella term that encompasses all aspects of how, why, how much, and when the learning occurs. A person’s intellectual journey is mightily influenced by his/her teachers and instructors and hence, making a solid and positive impact at this stage is very important. Learners should have the prowess to analyse for

themselves and construct and classify knowledge and this is only possible if they know how to learn, re-learn and unlearn what needs to be taught by the teacher. Pedagogy also includes sound knowledge of one's learning environment, community and common goals, and cultural backgrounds and should be tailor-made according to the need of the students. All the instructional objectives can only be set thereafter and a teaching methodology can be devised. "Adapting to characteristics of students and responding to their development is an inherent aspect of pedagogy" (Vieluf S., et al. 2012)

Let us take a look at the core tenets of effective pedagogy:



Now that we have an overview of how pedagogy affects every single aspect of teaching-learning, we must get an insight into how exactly a teacher needs to work his/her way around it and what are the steps involved.

What a teacher is expected to know and do!

These days teachers don't know what they are delivering, how exactly to form instructional objectives, and how much knowledge transfer/creation is happening on the ground as the basics of pedagogy in teacher education have been compromised.

1. Horizontal & Vertical Structure of the Subject

A teacher needs to know different topics and the scope of her subject across both the axis. To break it down, if a teacher is teaching the subject of Science to grade five, she must know what all content is covered in the textbook of that grade, but at the same time needs to have a thorough understanding of the content being delivered across different grades and how the intensity changes from one level to the other. If the scope of the content isn't studied too well,

whatever the teacher would deliver wouldn't be coherent and make sense for the student in the coming days or years.

2. Teacher must know complete curriculum (Curricular, Co-Curricular & Extracurricular)

A thorough understanding of the curriculum is an essential asset for a well-equipped teacher. Designing co-curricular activities and initiating them for the holistic development of the child is also equally important for a teacher. The ideas should be relevant and innovative. Students should be able to extrapolate to their curricular objectives. Knowing the curriculum enables the teacher to change her style of instruction whenever the class control is getting out of place and recapture the attention of students. Lesson planning and flow of topics can be decided accordingly and room for some flexibility can be kept.

3. Syllabus - Deciding short term instructional objectives

Teachers must be able to decide on short-term instructional objectives wisely as this forms the backbone of going ahead step by step. Every student might achieve these objectives at his own pace but a broad outlook should be pre-planned. The teacher needs to decide on the objectives for every grade and then also for every textbook. This activity helps the teacher to manage her time well and have some scope for other activities and informal interaction with the students.

4. Textbook Study and Evaluation (Unit Analysis & Content Analysis)

The textbook analysis is a scientific approach to breaking down a textbook based on its units and content. Since times immemorial, the textbook has been the guiding light for every teacher and gives the direction in which the curricular activities should proceed. Every system and every school relies on one or a combination of textbooks to achieve curricular goals. Understanding the essence of what is to be delivered from a textbook is a trick every teacher needs up her sleeve. Unit analysis and after that content analysis needs precision and an eye for detail. A teacher can only achieve the curricular goals if he/she can master this.

5. Suitable methodology – Evaluation, Learning objectives, Reasoning

After all the above-mentioned are looked into, the teacher needs to deliver and deliver effectively. The teacher would need a methodology using which she can convey everything to the students and this one tenet is getting modified rapidly with the use of technology and modern trends in the education sector given the prevailing social constraints. A lot of methods are available and the teacher just needs to select the most appropriate one so that the children gain maximum from the process. The methodology should be suitable for fulfilling and

achieving the learning objectives and it is imperative that a teacher can reason out why she has selected the method and give a logical explanation for the same.

Presentation of Learning

A teacher might know everything for himself but her Presentation of Learning (POL) should be as good. Let us understand the building blocks of POL from the diagram below.



A thorough hold on and understanding of all these building blocks is extremely important for a teacher as they can be far more effective if they are equipped beforehand. In all the teacher training establishments, the knowledge of pedagogy and POL must be at the forefront as this is the basis of Life Long Learning (LLL).

Now that we have sound conceptual knowledge, let us look at how things apply in the routine lives of a teacher. Theoretically speaking, all the above mentioned should be a part of training but unfortunately, the reality stands to be different.

As mentioned in the beginning, it is an unfortunate turn of events that the teachers being produced today are not driven enough and there is a sense of status quo in the educational sector. As compared to the other sectors, there is a disparity in payouts, status, and general quality of manpower in the field of education. Quality control has been overlooked and the screening procedures aren't in place resulting in mediocre quality of teachers. It is high time to address these grassroots concerns to motivate youth and children to perform to their optimum and create a success story for society on the whole.

Motivation for Teachers

“Teachers’ strategies signify their dispositions towards teaching and learning and are a more concrete expression of their approach, wanting, for example, their students to feel safe, or encouraging their participation or cultivating a cheerful teacher persona or being seen as a knowledgeable and authoritative figure.” (Westbrook J, Durrani N, Brown R, Orr D, Pryor J, Boddy J, Salvi F 2013). The crux and gravity of the whole situation need to be understood and the society, as well as the government, must give an impetus to the status of teachers. Let us look at a few things that can be modified to make the builders of our nation more competent and performance-oriented. The undermentioned points include both – that at an individual level and also as a society.

Inspiration & Aspiration

Though interchangeably used most of the time, these two terms are remarkably different. Inspiration is taken from the outside world and acts as a stimulus to generate new thoughts or bring about some change. On the contrary, aspiration is a sense of hope, a need to get better and create something, and is very intrinsic. A teacher needs to have the right mix of both. Just getting inspired by a lot of things and just staying at that point won’t help. The teacher needs to have certain aspirations so that some fruitful changes can be brought into the picture.

Policy Reforms for the upliftment of Status of Teachers in the society

The government needs to work on perks and the remuneration should be brought at par with other sectors if we wish to maintain the quality of manpower. For the quantum of work that they are doing, the teachers need to be rewarded amply by the government and the society also needs to pitch in to give them the right status that they deserve. Dishing out extra work to the teachers should be stopped and they should be given enough time to focus on planning their teaching-learning schedule. Good work should be appreciated and rewarded at regular intervals and at every level. The right push can make anyone perform to their best. Some principles of the corporate sector should be included in the education sector to make functioning smooth and effective. Right policies will result in capable manpower coming in and this would be the best change that we can bring into the system.

Conclusion

Effective pedagogies keep the student’s needs and previous knowledge at the core and build around it. The various techniques that one should consider from the point of pedagogy are guided learning (individual & group) and structured assignments which will help give a suitable direction to an individual’s learning. Metacognition should be taken care of and one needs to

generate a sense of inquiry if learning needs to be permanent. It is imperative to tickle one's grey cells to derive the maximum from them. This evolution will need a decent amount of thought and rigour and will be a cumulative effort of all who form a part of this learning circle.

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