

ROLE OF TEACHERS AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Best means topmost. According to NAAC best practices are quality enhancing academic, administrative, infrastructural strategies adopted by highly accredited institutions of higher learning in the present instance. Teachers play a very important role in the qualitative development of higher education. In the criterion VII of NAAC Innovations and Best practices has been stressed. This paper is an attempt to discuss how teachers can ensure quality in the institutes of higher education through best practices and innovations. It is a review study based on the materials found on the internet. Right kind of philosophy of the teachers is very important. Curriculum should nurture creativity. Critical thinking by the teachers adds new dimension to teaching. Teachers have a critical role in building competencies of learners through best pedagogic practices. Teachers should stress more on experiential learning. They should create research learning environment. Teachers can collaborate and co-create for integrated solutions thus bringing together science, technology, business, and community values.

Keywords: *Best Practices, Life Skill training, Environmental responsibility, ICT, Experiential learning, Constructive feedback, Leadership and Critical thinking.*



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INTRODUCTION: Aristotle rightly observed that: “We are what we repeatedly do: Excellence then is not an act but a habit”. Education is a social process. We must learn and benefit from each other’s experience. Institutions have to evolve suitable strategies. According to NAAC there are 5 stages of application in the best practices. They are 1. Identification of best practices, 2. Implementation of best practices, 3. Institutionalization of best practices, 4. Internalization of best practices, 5. Dissemination of best practices. Attitude play a more critical role in quality assurance. The best as an ideal should be the vision of

every institution. Teachers have a critical role to play. Students should desire and demand the best.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To identify the best practices of the higher educational institutes which the teachers can adopt.

To analyse the innovative ideas which can be implemented.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

What type of best practices can be adopted by higher educational institutes by the teachers?

What type of innovative ideas can be adopted by the higher educational institutes ?

METHODOLOGY: Review of related research studies is done in order to gain an understanding of the best practices adopted in colleges. Review method to study this area which would provide an overview of the best practices of the various higher educational institutions was used. In the present study secondary data sources including books, journals, newspapers and internet databases were used.

DISCUSSION:

The best practices as benchmarks help institutions to find their anchor for self improvement. Some best practices which can be adopted by the institutes of higher education are:

Life skill training: Life skills can be defined as abilities that enable humans to deal effectively with the demand and challenges of life. Many authors define life skills as behavioural , cognitive or interpersonal skills that enable individuals to succeed in various areas of life (Tripathy,2016).One of the best practice is the development of thinking skills. This involves being able to think of multiple solutions to a problem or develop new innovations in a creative way. Another life skill is social skills. This involves knowing how to develop healthy relationships, how to communicate in effective ways, and to interact with others successfully. Another is the emotional skill. This involves dealing with emotions effectively, and knowing who you are. According to UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO, the following are the basic life skills (Prajapati, Sharma, and Sharma, 2017). They are self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, empathy, coping with stress, and coping with emotion.

Environmental responsibility and sensibility: Every student should have environmental responsibility. This can be done by maintaining of the garden by the students. Conservation of water within the college campus can be done through water harvesting, scientific bio-

degradable waste management can be done through vermicompost pit. Use of solar lights for energy conservation, switching off lights and fan when not in use etc. Reaching out to the community helps to cultivate a sense of social responsibility in the students and inspire community work.

Integration of ICT resources into classroom teaching: Both teachers and students in higher educational institutions are using mobile devices for connecting. Social networking sites and online teaching tools are playing a significant role in teaching- learning process. Online teaching tools like what's app, you tube and Google classroom were the two most preferred social networking sites used by teacher educators. This is one of the best practices teachers can undertake. Teachers can deliver their content at any time and students can learn anywhere if they are fully equipped with the resources (Dhawan, S. 2020).

Experiential learning: This involves learning from experience. Theory of Experiential learning was proposed by David Kolb .For example person is going to learn how to drive a car. So he may either observe other people as they drive or by reading and analyzing a driving instruction book or he can get inside the car and get behind the seat of a car to practice driving on a test course (Kolb, 1984).Experiential Learning is not limited to hands on laboratory experiments, internships, field study, it is more than that. Learning objectives should be tide up with course activities and direct experiences reflecting on the experience. The students should critically analyse the experience and plan future actions based on what they have learnt. The teacher will create suitable learning experiences rather than just giving instructions.

Doing physical exercises: Scientific evidence indicates that regular physical exercise is an important factor of health. Appropriate dose of regular physical activity, participation in sports, keeps us mentally and physically fit as well as with social relationships (Kruk, 2009). According to WHO (2003) physical activity is a cheap and strong means for prevention of diseases, improvement of health and and wellbeing, and it also promotes integration and social interaction.

Constructive feedback: Is an essential element in letting people know where they are and where to go next in terms of expectations and goals- yours, their own, and the organizations, Constructive feedback is a tool that is used to build things up, not break things down. It helps learners evaluate their own performances. It encourages learners to try new skills, can challenge themselves etc. Feedback is about helping others learn. We should develop the

habit of feedback- both positive and constructive. According to Omer and Abdularhim (2017) for teaching to be successful, evaluation based feedback should be constructive and suitable.

Leadership: Institutions should create more self-reliant, career oriented and great leaders. Leadership plays an important role in every field of life whether it is political, social, cultural, managerial or educational field. In a study it has been found that the leadership of students showed more preference to authoritarian leadership style. The female students were more authoritative in leadership style than the male students (Najar & Dar, 2017).

Critical Thinking: Critical thinking is an intellectually disciplined process “of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, synthesizing, or evaluating information”(Paul, 1993). Critical thinking is focused on what to do and what to believe. (Ennis, 1996). According to Halpern (1998) critical thinking is “purposeful, reasoned, and goal-directed.” Education experts have time and again mentioned the importance of critical thinking in the course curriculum. Various studies have shown that critical thinking can be taught through various ways such as critical thinking based educational training with students participating actively in various activities. Critical thinking should not be taught just by describing them but also by applicability (Gelder, 2005).

CONCLUSIONS: National Knowledge Commission (2007) and National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) have suggested that a teacher needs to be prepared in relation to the needs and demands arising in the school context. So is the case with the teachers of higher educational institutes. The need of the hour is to objectively analyse how far the best practices and the innovative ideas can be adopted. Educators should be keen towards adopting the best practices thus bringing a paradigm shift in education.

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