SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERPERSONAL SKILLS FOR TEACHERS TRAINEES

(1) Kumari, Archana.(2)Dubey,Archana

(1) Research Scholar, School of Education, DAVV,

(2) Prof. Head &Dean (Ex), School of Education, DAVV.

Abstract: *This paper aims to discuss the Importance of Interpersonal skills for Teacher Trainees. Teachers being a potent agent of influence in the development of a balanced personality of students, are highly influential in students' behavioral outcome and educational experience. The various dimensions of Interpersonal skills subsequently have interrelatedness with teachers' behavior that contribute heavily in the cognitive and the affective growth of learners. Interpersonal skills include a wide range of skills in two broad categories i.e. Effective Interpersonal Communication and Interpersonal Relationship that provide competency to a teacher to generate a congenial learning environment through effective interaction and establishing positive teacher-student and peer relationships. Teachers are mediating factors between the students and the school system at large, and, it is essential that they maintain their social and emotional wellbeing. Traditionally, teachers have never been trained enough to acquire and implement these competencies during their training. But because the Interpersonal interactions in classrooms are the building blocks of teacher-student relationships, the behavior of teachers and its adaptation to students lays the foundation for proficient and efficient educators.*

Key Terms: Interpersonal Skills, Teacher behavior, Learner Growth.

1.1.0 INTRODUCTION

Teachers, or any form of educators, wear various hats every day in a classroom: organizer, instructor, manager speaker, facilitator, and sometimes unwillingly a dispute resolution specialist. Teachers are the key to changing the entire classroom environment, and they must be provided with the necessary skills to accomplish this. They must be capable of modeling, directing, and guiding children in emotional and social development (Hunter, 1977).Richardson argues that teaching strategies and skills are allied closely to attitudes towards the pupils and oneself (Richardson, 1983). In the light of Education as global conjecture and complexities of dynamic world, it is necessary to visualize the process of Education with the Integrative Affective – Cognitive Teaching learning approach (Mizam&Lashari,2004). Teaching that successfully blends the cognitive and affective as Integrative model is still not adopted in Teacher Training. Student teachers trained in traditional programs do not demonstrate the behaviors believed crucial to the development of pupil attitude, self-concept, and achievement (Amidon & Flanders, 1971). Interpersonal Relations and Group Process Approach are rarely focused in training education of Teachers. Teachers are unaware of certain aspects of their classroom teaching behavior (Brophy & Good, 1970). Most teachers, do not know how they respond to student's behavior and classroom problems, and are unaware of how their behavior affects their pupils (Rao, 2001). Rogers (1969) held that "certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner" yield significant learning. Apart from teaching theories, it is needed to impart knowledge and skills in the areas of general Problem-solving, Decision-making, Communication, Critical thinking and Creativity, and the ability to deal with Conflicting issues. For these purposes, strong Interpersonal skills, especially those relevant to communication are requisite for a good teacher. The teachers' knowledge of their own personal biases, feelings and moods, and how well they relate to other students as well as their colleagues, should have a high emphasis in the education domain. A student's level of learning and improvement is an indication of where an educator's Interpersonal Skills strength lies. Interpersonal skills are the sum total of the individual's ability to interact effectively with other people. The job of teaching not only requires interaction with the students, but also with other teachers, administrative staff, as well as pupil's parents. These interpersonal skills are the major foundation of effective and consistent communication, which is essential to being an educator.

1.2.0 Background of Interpersonal Behavior and Skill Development

The human being is inherently a social being. The Interpersonal Skills are at the very epicenter of social existence (Hagie, 1997).A model of Interpersonal behavior is based on principles of Social learning. (Argyle,1967. In Hartley;1999). Argyle (1995) proposed that much of Interpersonal behavior is in response to social drives for affiliation, dominance, ego, identity, or aggression and therefore, communication affect and are affected by each other, in a system of reciprocal influence.

The Social learning view of Interpersonal behavior is based on the assumption that a person's responses to the social situation are acquired through previous experiences and continually modified by social consequences generated in interaction with others. The interaction is viewed as one of the reciprocal influences where each individual can modify the social behavior of others as the result of the consequences of the behavioral act. Thus the social behavior is conceptualized as based on reciprocity and mutual influence (Adler et al.,986).Social context is very important and one needs to understand the social context - how the time and the place influenced their actions and reactions. Another is how the two participants saw themselves (their social identity) and each other (social perception) and codes used by them. (Hartley,1999).

Triandis' Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour

"Behaviour in any situation is, according to Triandis, a function of the intention, of the habitual responses, and of the situational constraints and conditions. The intention is influenced by social and affective factors as well as by rational deliberations. One is neither fully deliberative, in Triandis' model, nor fully automatic. Behaviour is influenced by moral beliefs, but the impact of these is moderated both by emotional drives and cognitive limitations. Social factors include norms, roles and self-concept. Norms are the social rules about what should and should not be done.
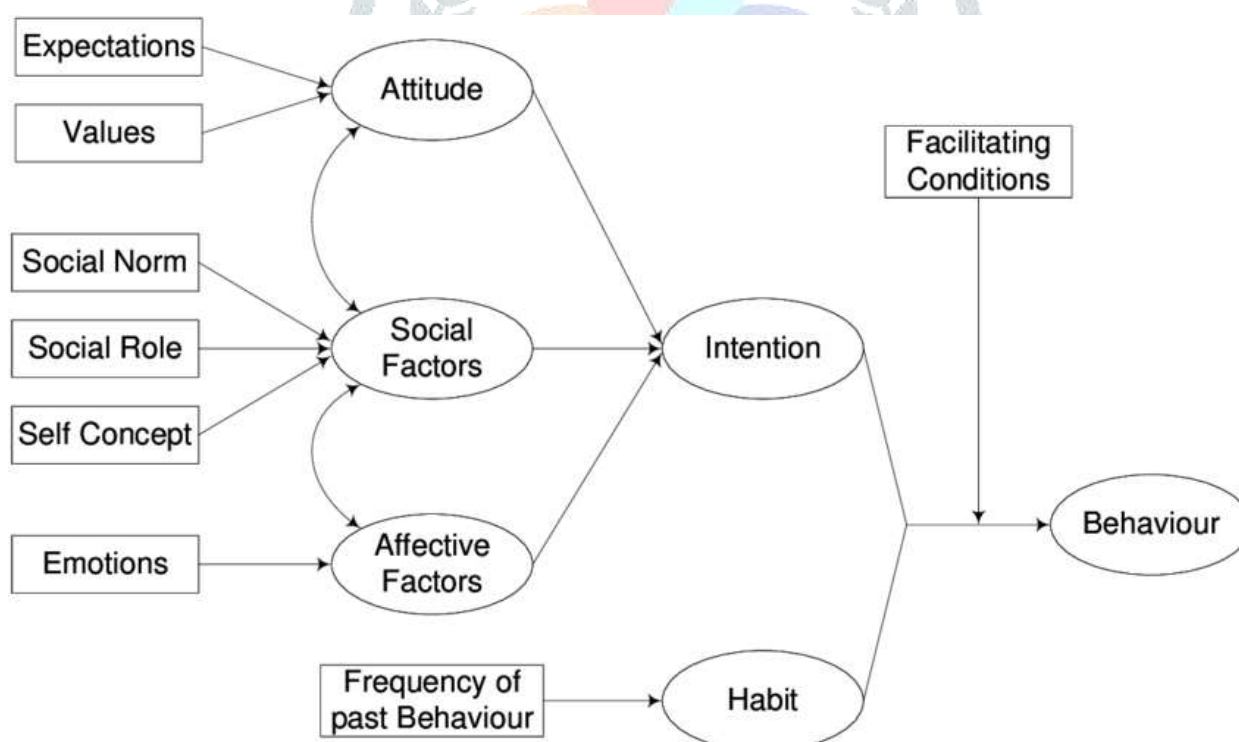
Source: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-48544-7_3

Figure 1: Triandis' Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour

Given our knowledge about the utility of good interpersonal behavior in teaching, we can hence formulate the necessary educator involvement in the given theoretical framework. The main contribution of interpersonal behavior in a classroom lies in facilitating conditions, wherein the adequacy of interpersonal communicative behavior of an educator defines the classroom behavior in general. These conditions are in turn motivated by teaching intentions, and the general habit formed over the years of being trained for effective

education. The intentions and habits of a teacher are in turn dependent on their attitude which informs the major concept of teaching method, the social factors, which is why teachers trained in urban and suburban regions have different methods of explanation and correction, and, affective factors, that is, how connected is a teacher to his own personal feelings and his empathy towards students. This framework informs the major aspects of interpersonal behavior, which leads us to defining the adequate or desired interpersonal skills to be cultivated in a teacher.

Interpersonal Skills

Hargie, 1997 defined Interpersonal Skills as the process by which individuals implement a set of goal directed, interpersonally related, situationally appropriate social behaviors, which are learned and controlled. Interpersonal Skills are the qualities and behavior that people exhibit while interacting with others. Argyle (1984) defines Interpersonal Skills as "skill necessary to produce desired effects on other people in a social situation. In the interaction process, communication inevitably takes place within a context and is influenced by it (Rosegren, 2000). Interpersonal skills contribute to dealing successfully with the other person and plays a vital role in many professions. We find that many worries and frustration could be avoided by better understanding of social interaction processes. Sometimes daily life encounters are unpleasant and embarrassing because of failure to make proper adjustment with the situation that demands appropriate social behavior. Today, so much conflict is arising between family and in the workplace. Group conflict arises when a person works in a group partly due to difficulties in managing appropriate behavior during interaction. Team's success mostly depends on group cohesiveness that is resultant of Interpersonal relations. Human beings are such inherent social beings that when in deficit of an opportunity for fruitful interaction, one's' life suffers in one or another way to reach their goal (Floyd, 2009). The service industry involves dealing with people rather than things for e.g.; teacher, customer care, administrator, guidance worker, psychologist, counsellor, sales person etc. In this way, Interpersonal Skills are not only essential for the work life but in all aspects of life. Interpersonal means between people, which involves interaction between each other, which takes shape based on the expectation one wants to have in the relationship. So it occurs within a relationship notion, such as; a co-worker, relation in class, family or business relations, etc. (Lazarus, 1966) has argued that Interpersonal relationships which evoke anxiety may inhibit the performance of socially adaptive behavior. In some instances, individuals who have never learned behavior appropriate to a specific situation, Training them should focus on teaching the requisite skills.

The partner for 21st Century skills (P21) includes numerous Interpersonal Capacities – working Creatively, Communicating and Collaborativing with others, skills that a student should learn as they progress to post-secondary (P-21 framework). It describes complex communication/ social skills as those skills that involve processing and interpreting both Verbal and Non-Verbal information from others in order to respond appropriately.

In the late twentieth century, it became the focus of the investigation, and its assumption relies on that there are measurable behavioral elements that comprised the Interpersonal Skills and which interplay during the social interactional process. Many Social educationists viewed Interpersonal Skills as a learned behavior that can be developed through training.

Bandura's (1986) Social cognition theory proposed that all behavioral sets are learned except primary reflexes.

Kelly (1982) emphasized the skill as the identifiable, learned behavior that individuals use in Interpersonal situations to obtain or maintain reinforcement from the environment.

Operational Definition of Interpersonal Skill

The definition considered in present study by researcher: Interpersonal skills are comprised of those behavioral competencies that enable the person to interact effectively with others while communicating verbally (spoken words) and nonverbally (body language, gestures, speech qualities) including Active listening, which are reinforced by integrating empathy, managing emotions, assertiveness, and decision-making behaviors to maintain proper Interpersonal relations with individual or group in social interactions.

NCF-2005 has strongly advocated the development of life skills such as, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Self-awareness, Interpersonal relations, Effective communication, Empathy, Negotiation and Decision making through distinctly introducing Life skill Education in School Curriculum. Related to the teachers' teaching performance, it is highly expected that they have skill to communicate effectively because it is considered as one important determinant of teaching and learning success (Wahyuni, 2017). Teachers are a mediating factor and it is essential to be good in their social and emotional wellbeing. (Gole, 2015). In the teaching profession Oral communication skills are critically significant and are expected to develop soft skill competencies to avail better job opportunities Okoro et al (2017).

1.3.0 RELATEDNESS OF INTER PERSONAL SKILLS DIMENSIONS TO TEACHERS' BEHAVIOR FOR DESIRED AFFECTIVE GROWTH OF LEARNERS

In fact Interpersonal Skills are conceived with multiplicity as they includes attitudinal, behavioral and cognitive components. Interpersonal skills include a wide range of skills in two broad categories i.e. Interpersonal Communication and Interpersonal Relationship. The Effective Interpersonal Communication means communicating in ways that are effective and appropriate in given situations, effectiveness here means how well communication achieves its goal. Moreover, a humanist education gives more emphasis in establishing a personal relationship and communication between individuals, interpersonal and group within the school (Wahyuni,2017).An individual's Interpersonal Skills also determine one's ability to initiate, develop and maintain caring as well as productive relationships. The set of behavioral dimensions to be considered in this process are discussed as follows:

Verbal Expression

It is the process through which messages are exchanged purposefully by using language and spoken words with reference to the context in an effective manner. What to say, How to say, what words to be used to convey the message. Teachers should use words carefully as each spoken word provokes a feeling, specific and distinct and the persons derive the meaning on the basis of their own perception. So, In selection of words the intended concept must be clear in the mind of the educator. Effective class behavior refers to extent to which verbal behavior in classroom is student-centered. The teacher is the one who always provides an explanation in the class. The teacher as a sender of message should determine the framework of his message and also express his expectations to the students openly with clear, concise, accurate information, using appropriate words in oral communication. Teachers who are good at speaking are able to help students improve their grasping by simplifying the content, asking questions to clear their doubt, giving compliments, and making requests for feedback. Seetha (2013), found that training in Communicative Competencies have significantly enhanced Self-Esteem. In this communication process the knowledge of other people, their psychological characteristics, social background are also important aspects while encoding the message so the commonness in understanding could be developed.

Non-Verbal Expression

It includes motoric expression i.e. Facial expression: showing emotion, pleasant smiling, etc.; Eye contact: Intermittently looking directly at other person; Tone of voice: volume, pitch, accent etc.; Body posture and movements: relaxed, shoulder back, head up, facing the other person; Gestures: Nodding head in approval disapproval, Use body parts movement hand and arms to assist understanding of spoken words etc.; Silence, Paralanguage: in interaction. In Interactive communication which is based on spoken words and the message sender does not use any nonverbal communication the expected understanding of the message from the audience is not possible. Non – verbal modifies a verbal message, with use of non - verbal aspect of verbal expression like tone of voice, speed of delivery, pitch, regulators, reinforcing behavior through facial gestures, smile, and the Paralanguage. By using of non- verbal expressions, students are more likely to be receptive to ideas and also helps make the spoken words meaningful and comprehensible. Maintaining the eye contact teacher can secure the trust of students, while keeping contact with them and being aware of students' attentive behavior. Silence or giving a is very important to bring focus on a point, maintaining student's disruptive behavior. "Non-verbal communication is highly reliable in the communication process, so if the recipient of a message is between two contradictory verbal and nonverbal messages, logic dictates to pay more attention to non-verbal than verbal message because non-verbal cues frequently reveal the intention of the sender of the information and reflect his/her emotional reactions." (Bambaeeroo and Shokrpour, 2017)

Active Listening

Active listening is the process of paying attention to the conversation and making conscious efforts to understand the message remaining neutral, non-judgmental that means trying not to take sides (biases) or forming any prejudice based opinion very early in the conversation. Teacher is a leader in class and a role model for students. However, many times teachers do not give full attention to what the students want to include, through their queries or experiences during the interaction and do not make an effort to answer questions raised by students. Teachers usually do not care about the feedback received from the students while delivering lectures. Teachers also try to check the student's listening behavior and ensure attentiveness and for that student should be asked to repeat what they just heard in class. Active Listening does not mean the listener makes a comment every time in between conversation it is about patience to listen to the view in complete and then making any move to get clarification or reaction. Good listening skills is a tool to develop empathy and understanding with the students and it helps to assess whether students understand what they are being taught. Listening skills also help in negotiating with students and solving any conflict if it prevails in the classroom. (Kavita,2013) reported 'Class question behavior technique' has improves the delivery behavior of student- teachers, pupil response management behavior.

Group Interaction

Group interaction is the dynamic interaction between the group members, where the members are actively participative, collaborative, empower, and motivate each other to attain the purpose effectively. Classrooms are social settings and teaching - learning occurs through social interaction between teachers and students. Teachers use the various methods of group learning in class, Collaborative learning, Projects, Discovery and Constructivism all these practices need competencies on part of the teacher to deal with group behavior of the learner, assisting to get better performance of each student with shared knowledge. In cooperative situations, students strive to reach their goals through the support and joint focus of others in their group or class. Teacher also deals with setting rules for collaborative task and discussion like (a) everyone listens to the person speaking, (b) everyone well conversant with their role and responsibilities (c) harmful negative remarks are not allowed, and (d) different viewpoints are accepted (e) making collective decision listening to others' suggestions. Seema (2018) used Social training and found it effective in developing Social competence and Collaborative learning, reducing Social Anxiety among students. Teacher needs a set of skills of leadership to motivate the learner, goal clarification, and supportive relationship among learners, positive attitude building, valuing other points of view in form of appreciation that set of teacher behavior can promote enthusiasm for learning. (Pushpa, 2014).

Assertiveness

Assertiveness refers to standing up for one's personal rights- expressing thoughts and feelings in honest and appropriate ways as well as for the others' right too. Succinctly, assertiveness can be defined as the ability to express our thoughts and feelings openly in an Honest, Appropriate, Respectful and Direct way (HARD). A teacher in a classroom usually practices 3Cs of assertive information delivery, namely, confidence in the information provided or the request made, clarity in the information such that it is easy to understand, and, a controlled way of information delivery, which doesn't involve any agitation, but still enforces firmness. (Milovanovic, 2016) conducted a study to measure the range of assertiveness between preschool vs prospective teachers. The results showed that there is a significant difference in the degree of assertiveness between the candidates and students, in favour of the students. It was also determined that the degree of assertiveness significantly increases in parallel with the year of study. (Martínez, 2016) found that teacher's hetero-assertiveness affected students' social competence, lessening their dominance, and hence, antisocial attitude.

Managing Emotions

Managing Emotions is related to interpersonal relationships. It comprises the ability to recognize, regulate, and express one's own emotions as well as being aware of others' emotions and mood, and to react towards them appropriately. Emotional intelligence and the capacity to develop ideal methods of communicating the feelings, defines the kind of professional relationships, interpersonal communications, and also are related to the ability to motivate ourselves. Rao (2001) conducted a study entitled Development of In service training program for Navodya Vidyalaya teachers in meeting students' emotional needs. (Chen, 2018) conducted a

study on understanding the relationship between Emotion polarity and the Teaching approach a teacher candidate uses. The modelling in the study demonstrated that more student-centred approaches are the consequence of positive teacher emotions while a teacher-centred approach is the consequence of negative teacher emotions. Research has also shown that teachers who have a better hold of their emotions and are more apt at managing them, experience more satisfaction with their work and are especially more effective when dealing with difficult students. This is especially due to a better classroom culture that is fostered as a result of better managed emotions, hence promoting a sense of stability enabling greater student learning. Richardson,(1983) argues that teaching strategies and skills are allied closely to attitudes towards the pupils and oneself. The importance of communication and empathy with clients as a means of understanding situations from their point of view; self-reflection as a means of overcoming stereotypical judgements and responses. Elliot, J. (1991).

Empathy

Empathy is one of the components of Interpersonal relationships. Empathy is the ability to imagine oneself in another's place and understand things from their perspective. As found by (Zaki, 2008), successful empathetic communication depends on both the receptivity of the perceiver, as well as how a social partner communicated a willingness to be empathized with. (Kupetz, 2014) found that the conversations about emotional events are more successful when people appropriately time their empathy. (Jones, 2018) in his review of empathetic teachers, found that, intentional empathy on the part of the educator leads to more classroom engagement, higher academic achievement, better communication skills, lower likelihood of bullying, less aggressive behaviors and emotional disorders and develop more positive relationships.(Rogers, 1969) stated in the book 'The Freedom to Learn', that when the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reactions from the inside, has a sensitive awareness of the process of how education and learning seems to the student…..the likelihood of learning is significantly increased.(Ayub, 2017) studied the Life Skill training effect on Empathy and reducing Psychological stress and found it effective (Arora and Sharma,2018) Studied social maturity in relation to Psychological well-being and reported both are positively related.

Managing Relations

Managing Relations is a kind of interpersonal relationship skill that represents maintaining positive and healthy relations with others on an individual basis or to group members. Interpersonal means between people, which involves interaction between each other, which takes shape based on the expectation one wants to have in the relationship. So it occurs within a relationship notion, such as; a co-worker, relation in class, family or business relations, etc. Students gain a sense of self-efficacy through the modeling and supportive communication of teachers (Bandura, 1997). Teacher's Capacity to perceive world from student's point of view, Relationship with class (good rapport), Participation in community and professional activities. In the context of a student's life, positive emotional attachments to peers, teachers, and parents promote not only healthy social, emotional, and intellectual functioning but also positive feelings of self-worth and self-esteem (Connell & Wellborn, 1991).

Decision Making

Decision Making is the process of identifying the problem, gathering the information, and selecting the best alternative by weighing the evidence for the solution at individual circumstances or in consensus with the group. The main idea of interpersonal decision-making is enabling a person to take a look at another person's perspective to get an idea of what the other person might be communicating. Peer Instruction based on Cooperative learning promotes critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills. Teacher-set tasks, assessment, and grouping strategies influence the goals students adopt (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). (Zandvliet, 2014) mentioned in the book "Interpersonal judgements in education: From Theory to Practice", the positive effect of effective mentoring by a teacher can lead to what (Glasser, 1998) refers to as Lead Management, which is different from Boss Management. This involves: a coaching approach, democratic decision making, focuses on internal motivation, encouraging self-responsibility and encourages self-evaluation. (Colton, 1993) describes a conceptual framework that integrates teacher's cognitive, critical, and personal characteristics; the framework serves to guide the development of reflective decision making,

showing teacher educators how to form effective teachers. The model's collegial environment encourages efficacy, flexibility, consciousness, and social responsibility and the paper shows the effectiveness of the framework in two different implementations.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that a Teacher has responsibilities for facilitating a conducive & congenial class environment. Developing a teacher's competency in affective behavior is related to providing an accepting attitude, which is recognized as atmosphere of warmth, intimacy and trust. Encouraging each child to participate and helping children to express their feelings, giving aid of perception check and disclosures that aim at how they feel in a situation, where as using active listening helps to clarify doubts and increase children's awareness, mastery in verbal and nonverbal expression can improve the method of asking children to demonstrate their understanding. Interpersonal skills developed by a teacher can also assist in guiding children in problem-solving steps, confidence in organizing participatory group work. In addition, Pupil Intrapersonal and Interpersonal skills are important goals. But sadly, teachers are neither given opportunity nor required to learn and demonstrate these competencies and skills that are necessary to help children in realizing these goals. Through training in Interpersonal skills and systematic observation, teachers can become aware of their behavior, its impact on the pupils, and can choose to change their behavior if there is a need. Interpersonal skills training for teacher should give emphasis on a skill-based approach to develop the ability to Communicate effectively, motivate and getting accustomed to socially acceptable behavior to lead learner for an effective social life.

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