

Teaching: A research based Profession

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Abstract

Research influences teaching and teaching influences research. It give rise to reaffirm convictions, discussions, raise new questions and challenge assumptions in order to disclose the complex nature of teaching and learning process. It helps teachers in understanding the work ,its importance, short and long-term implications of the work and rationale for decisions and actions taken which proves helpful in building a repertoire to deal with the unexpected problems and make improvement. Teachers are always told to use “researched-based strategies. Teacher as a researcher does research either in collaboration with other experienced researcher or independently to achieve the actual objective of writing and publishing a report. In contrast, research based thinking is to use research competencies for better teaching and learning experience and more effective educational decisions . The above described way of research by teacher is more like action research and is near to qualitative research. An important tool in the hand of teachers, administrative staff and stakeholder to make effective changes in school environment is undoubtedly action research. Practitioners who are busy in action research are always motivated to "examine the dynamics of their classrooms, ponder the actions and interactions of students, validate and challenge existing practices, and take risks in the process" because a reflective and professional stance is required.

Keywords: Research, teacher.

Introduction

In the present era teaching has become a research-based profession. It is beyond any doubt that research has made teaching very satisfying and effective. There are several means of enhancement of effectiveness and satisfaction in teaching which are used in combination to achieve the effectiveness in teaching but priority should be given to research. Research influences teaching and teaching influences research. It give rise to reaffirm convictions, discussions, raise new questions and challenge assumptions in order to disclose the complex nature of teaching and learning process. Research also helps in exploring varied factors describing the intricacies of single student’s psychology, culture and personal history which affects one’s instructional decisions. Research helps teachers in understanding the work ,its importance, short and long-term implications of the work and rationale for decisions and actions taken which proves helpful in building a repertoire to deal with the unexpected problems and make improvement. Decisions based upon evidences are morally strong. Research, on large scale, into teaching and learning can help in changing trends to make educational outcomes related to economic and social needs.

Teachers are always told to use “researched-based strategies. The purpose of using research-based teaching strategies is to make rational argumentation of educational decisions. Teacher as a researcher does research

either in collaboration with other experienced researcher or independently to achieve the actual objective of writing and publishing a report. In contrast, research based thinking is to use research competencies for better teaching and learning experience and more effective educational decisions. The above described way of research by teacher is more like action research and is near to qualitative research. An important tool in the hand of teachers, administrative staff and stakeholder to make effective changes in school environment is undoubtedly action research. In education action research is defined as a process to understand and study school environment for improving the quality of education. It resolves problem in school and specifically in classes by providing understanding and knowledge of improving educational practices. An action research follows a systematic path and provides many valuable opportunities to the professionals of teaching. (Frabutt et al., 2008), has provided a very clear evidence that action research is an important exercise to be undertaken by teacher for systematic, collaborative (Kemmis et.al 1988), and participatory (Holter et.al. 2012; Mills, 2011) inquiry process which vigorously seeks to address and redress areas of concern. The multiple beneficial opportunities consist of increase in teacher empowerment, facilitation of educators professional development and bridging of gap between educational practices and research. In education action research is carried out for determining the ways of enhancing the lives of learners. Simultaneously, the lives of the professionals who work for the development of their educational systems are also enhanced with action research. To point up, action research is unswervingly related to the professional development and growth of educators. Hensen says that action research: (a) develops teacher's knowledge straightforwardly linked to the classrooms, (b) encourages insightful teaching, (c) extends pedagogical range of educators, (d) makes teachers responsible of their dexterity, (e) reinforces the relation between teaching and success of learners, (f) fosters an openness to learn new things and apply new ideas, and (g) provides educators an ownership of varied and effective teaching practices. The specialised knowledge and technical skills which are required for effective and positive changes within schools, classroom and communities by teachers are provided by action research (Johnson, 2012; Stringer, 2008). Traditional pre-service and ineffective teacher in-service training programs can be replaced with useful action research workshops as ways of developing effective professional activities. To make teacher in-service training program effective extend them to multiple sessions, including active learning to a to the manipulation of ideas and enhancement of integration of the adequate information, and alignment of the presented concept with the accessible goals, curriculum and teaching concerns.

As a consequence to the offered professional growth opportunities to educators, teacher's empowerment is also facilitated by action research. Teachers, in particular, are said empowered when data collected and used by them for making decisions for their school and classrooms. Within the classroom, teachers who are empowered with this can execute varied practices in their classrooms to harmonize their instructional style and teaching philosophy which best suit to the needs of the students. Teachers are empowered enough to exercise their creative ideas and individual talents in their teaching learning process to enhance students' achievement, and make schools more effective communities of learning. Johnson (2012) emphasized the gap between educational research and teaching learning practices is bridged by action research. For illustration, the theoretical components is used to support the action research project helpful for practitioners in understanding and observing the situation of a classroom. Simultaneously, keeping in mind the best practices the collected data "are used to understand or inform theories and research related to best practice." Similarly action research motivates the teachers to enhance their professional disposition and become a permanent learner in their schools and classroom. Practitioners of action research are motivated to "examine the dynamics of their classrooms, ponder the actions and interactions of students, validate and challenge existing practices, and take risks in the process" because a reflective and professional stance is required. Alike regularly exercised actions by teachers daily specific actions use systematic and strategic action research plan to provide daily actions an increased structure, methodological and focused rigor.

Traditional educational researchers design studies and develop questions for conducting a research within the schools which are considered objective by outside observers of classroom interaction. The moment teachers become teacher-researchers, the "traditional descriptions of both teachers and researchers change. Teacher-researchers raise questions about what they think and observe about their teaching and their students' learning. They collect student work in order to evaluate performance, but they also see student work as data to analyze in order to examine the teaching and learning that produced it." When a classroom is observed by teacher from a

stance of "How can I make teaching/learning better?" then a teacher takes a Teacher Researcher stance. Teacher Research is something done by teachers not something done to them. A teacher researcher must keep the goal of putting "Best Practices" for learning into actual classroom. Research by a teacher empowers them to make changes which are positive and effective changes in terms of classroom practices which in reality provides appropriate information required for effective learning in real classrooms. Above all teacher researcher improves the learning experience of their students by engaging them in reflective practices which always seek to find more efficient method for the implementation of teaching and learning in real situation. It is said that "school is not a preparation for life but *is* life", this means it creates a context where change, creativity, innovation, doubt, error and uncertainty, when used everyday, can become real for creating a highly evolved teaching-learning relationship; where the solution to certain problems leads to the emergence of new expectations, new questions and new changes.

Conclusion

Action research should be made one of the core subject in pre service training programs for teachers as action research has the power to improve practice in schools, classrooms and communities for making effective learning environment. it is in teacher's hand to 'customize' their action research, as topics to investigate in this teaching field are as diverse as the daily vignettes evidenced in the teaching and learning environment. Ultimately, empowerment and pragmatic appeal of action researcher make this methodology of research an important tool in hand of educators for professional development.

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