INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW, EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND SPORTS STUDIES (IJLESS)

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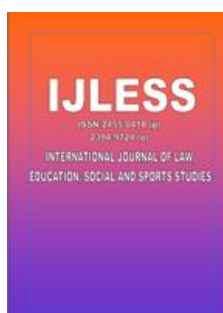6.0176
(ICI)

TRANSFER OF TEACHERS' TRAINING INTO CLASSROOM PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims at exploring the existing situation of Nepal in transferring teachers' training into classroom practices along with finding out perception about the transfer of learnt skill and knowledge in training session. The study is pursuant to introspective design for examining one's own perception and sensory experience through secondary resources including the websites, document study, reviewed related articles, and journals. Various problems in the transfer of teacher training into classroom practice such as the gap between demand and supply of teacher, sustains method of training, outdated curriculum, low supervision services, inadequate empirical research, profit-oriented of education, etc. have emerged. About 50 percent studies have shown that the transformation of teachers' training into classroom practice in Nepal seems very ineffective. This article emphasises on theoretical practices and existing situation of teachers' training and transfer of its skill, knowledge, and attitude into classroom practices.

Keywords: Transfer, teacher training, theoretical aspect, empirical research, ramification

Introduction

Teaching is regarded as a profession that requires specialized knowledge acquired through required academic qualification, training, and experiences. Teacher training is a vital tool in preparing skilled teachers who play an important role in shaping the quality of classroom delivery and her/his Professional Development (PD). Teacher training is not for the sake of knowledge and certificate alone; it is to develop skills to use in the classroom. Professional learning which is designed to improve teacher practice and student outcomes had become the priority (Killion, 2010) at present. McDonald (2010) argues that PD still lacks an integrative theoretical framework and there is a need to incorporate the key PD dimensions of teacher motivation and learning with the transfer.

According to Asian Development Bank (ADB) as cited in NCED (2011) first training center was established in 1949 for preparing the primary school for basic school. On September 9, 1954, normal school had established as a new program of teacher education during the inauguration. The establishment of College of Education in 1956, the first, degree-granting college in Nepal for teachers, was another significant development in education. National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971 made teacher training mandatory and differentiated between trained and untrained teacher. With the reference to expand teachers' opportunity and to provide professional support, radio education

teacher training program with the assistance of USAID initiated in 1978 and institutionalized under the MoE 1980 (CERID, 2003). *Seti* project with the assistance of USAID had launched in Seti zone having short term (21 days) and long term (10 months) training for the primary school teacher. Science Education Development Unit (SEDU) was established in 26 districts to provide in-service training for secondary school teachers. It provided short term in-service training for lower secondary and secondary level teachers of science, mathematics, and English.

Education system of Nepal was restructured after the restoration of democracy in 1990 as per report prepared by National Education Commission in 1992. With financial support of ADB in 1992, MoE implemented teacher training project as Primary Education Development Project (PEDP). In 1993, National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) established nine Primary Teacher Training Centers (PTTCs) in a different part of the county in collaboration with PEDP. These PTTCs are known as Educational Training Centers (ETCs) these days. The project was designed to provide service training to school teachers as the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) and Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP). NCED as an umbrella institution played a role for teachers' training and handed the responsible task over PTTC and SEDP. With the connection of the school sector reform program, short term need-based training to all teachers delivered when NCED took initiatives. It is regarded as teachers' professional development and fully practical and demand-based. Transformation of learnt teacher training into classroom practice in professional development in classroom instructions seems to be ineffective in the existing situation. Teachers' mindset, availability and proficient use of new technology, adopting new method, style and strategy of teaching and learning, improve quality of education through best use of learning material and resulted in high degree of learning outcome, there seems to have fewer efforts from every institutions, personnel attempt and poor culture of schools' management system.

Thapa (2012) argues that despite these efforts, classroom instruction has not been effective. Similarly, Kafle, Adhikari, and Thapa (2011), stressed that people are raising question on the quality of public school and parent and their children are not satisfied with the level and quality of public schools' achievements. Moreover, Khaniya (2006), opined that various causes are influencing and contributing on the ineffectiveness of the teacher's classroom activities such as the absence of training, mastery of subject matter, teacher motivation, inadequate instructional materials, classroom learning environment, and political pressure. As per World Bank (2005), the quality of teacher, research-based on instructional materials, and teacher with an adequate formal education can have a significant impact on student performance and crucial for effective classroom delivery than other school-level factors. Polland and Bourne (1994) emphasize training and experience as a teaching professional that requires specialized knowledge. Learnt teachers' training for transforming into classroom practice requires physical facilities, instructional materials; training to the teachers will be supportive in teaching-learning. It is because teaching cannot take place in a vacuum. Similarly, CERID (2003) argues 50 percent training skills transfer in real classroom.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to explore the existing situation of Nepal in transforming learnt teachers' training into classroom practices and to find out perception about the transfer of learnt skill and knowledge in training session pursuant to document review.

Methodology of the Study

This research paper was highly based on the theoretical, policy document, research report, and dissertation reviews. In qualitative researches, the aim is to develop an understanding about how people make sense of their life, to outline the process of making sense, and to describe how people interpret their experiences (Merriam, 2013). It was used introspective design for examining researcher's own perception and sensory experiences while carrying out this study. In this regard,

study was in descriptive and qualitative in nature. The documents to be analysed for the study were selected purposefully in order to explore the existing situation of Nepal in transforming learnt teachers' training into the classroom and find out perception about the transfer of skill and knowledge into classroom practice through professional development. Research data were collected from secondary resources for analyzing them included the websites, based on document study, reviewed related articles, and journals in this study. The data collection tools had taken self-reflection and study as secondary sources of data. The data were collected in the introspective diary journals using the explanatory mode for analysing data.

Result and Discussion

This study was consistence with the transfer of learnt teacher's training into classroom practice with reviewed literature document, articles, and journals as given below:

Classroom Practice in Professional Development

Earlier conceptions emphasised teacher deficits in knowledge and skills which was responsible for informing teacher' experiences (McDonald, 2009). Today, it is considered a systematic process facilitating teacher change in attitudes, beliefs and practices, aiming to improve student learning outcomes (OECD, 1989, Ganser, 2000, Villegas-Reimers, 2003). It is considered a transformational process incorporating ideas of teacher learning, transfer of training and improved student outcomes. For example, Villegas-Reimers (2003) stated that "Professional development, in a broad sense, refers to the development of a person in his or her personal role" (p. 11) and this process "has a significant impact upon teachers' beliefs and practices, students' learning and on the implementation of educational reform" (p. 19). Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) noted there are unknowns about teacher learning and the students' responses to the new ideas and the changes in teaching behaviours. What is required is a clearer understanding of teacher PD encompassing a more integrated perspective of teacher learning, motivation and the transfer of training (McDonald, 2010).

Another dimension of change- knowledge about the development of professional competency- describes the educational and experiential journey of the novice to the expert role (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). In the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model, the professional was viewed as moving through the stages of being a novice, advanced beginner, competent worker, and proficient to expert professional and each stage was considered to have implications for the individual's thinking and behaviour. Eraut (1994) identified it as a two-level acquisition of skills and knowledge; training remains important at the different levels and this is then progressively developed by experience. According to Schon (1987), the competent professional is one who uses professional art in dealing with expertise and experience but reflects on contextual issues. Cheetham and Chivers (1996) believe that professional competence is a more complex and multifaceted holistic concept resting upon over-arching meta-competencies (such as problem-solving, communication, creativity, self-development, mental agility, reflection, learning, and analysis). This, in turn, leads to the development of four core competencies: knowledge (work-related knowledge and ability to apply), functional expertise (performance of work-based tasks to achieve outcomes), behavioural indicators (appropriate professional behaviour), and ethical understanding (application of personal and professional values).

Undoubtedly, one of the critical determinants of behaviour is motivation and yet research about teacher motivation is similar to teacher learning – it has been largely overlooked (Addison & Brundett, 2008). The early fundamental explanations of teacher motivation regularly defined the importance of reward (expectancy theory), compensation for effort (equity theory) and the importance of varied and challenging work (job enrichment theory) (Oregon School Boards Association, 2009). According to Frase (1992), the alternative intrinsic motivational approach was used to explain that teacher motivation could be located in the desire to help students learn, improve work context (e.g., class size, discipline. resources) and valued content (e.g., opportunity for PD,

challenging work, and collegiality). It is surprising that even less research is available about teacher motivation and PD because change and innovation are recognised as being difficult and teacher performance crucial for improving student outcomes (Carey, 2004; Haycock, 1998; Smith & Gillespie, 2007).

The literature on motivation to transfer (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Yelon, Sheppard, Sleight & Ford, 2004) can provide some further insight into the nature of motivation in PD and, although not directly reporting on teacher PD, it has significant implications. These studies have indicated that a range of variables is related to motivation and transfer. However, many of the reported findings in this area are debatable, contradictory and limited in generality.

Transfer of Training in Real Class

McDonald (2010) has identified the transfer of training as an integrative concept in PD because it embodies the interactive dynamics of learning and motivation. As teacher behaviour is recognised to impact upon student outcomes, there is an urgent need to prioritise the importance of transfer as a component part of understanding PD.

Baldwin and Ford (1988) conceptualized transfer of training in terms of an input-process-output model that transfer was once again recognized as a particularly important topic. This interest was sustained by a number of factors including: new learning paradigms that emphasized relevancy and theory to practice links; the emergence of the knowledge, capital and global economies demanding meaningful, relevant and transportable information; and the recognition that the high levels of training funding did not result in transfer (Leherman, McDonald & Doyle, 2006).

Haskell (2001, p. xiii) defines transfer as "the use of past learning and the application -of-that learning both similar and new situations" whilst transfer of training has a more restricted meaning referring to the application of knowledge, skills and attitudes learned from purposeful training experiences (including the informal learning opportunities). However, the transfer is a controversial and debated concept and there have been many commentaries relating to its theoretical foundations, definition and nature, conceptual clarity and value, utility, measurement, and the approaches that best accomplish it (Lebeiman, et al., 2006). The recent and numerous reviews of transfer of training (Blume, Ford, Baldwin &. Huang, 2010; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Cheng & Hampson, 2008) attest to its academic and practice importance.

There have been a number of transfer models (e.g., Wallace, 1992; Yelon, 1992) relating to PD. These accounts have highlighted important characteristics such as the interaction of participant and facilitator qualities, school context, workshop features, intentional or spontaneous transfer, task variables, relevance and learner support but there is no understanding of a multi-dimensional integrative cohesive explanation.

Ramification of Training Skills

Various studies conducted by NCED (July 2000a; July 2000b; July 2002a, July 2002b; 2005); CERID (July 2002a), MOE (1997, 1999), PEDP (1993) have reported that the skills covered in the training are not transferred in the actual classroom teaching-learning in an intended degree. These are described in the following paragraphs in brief:

Unconvinced with newer techniques/ methods. CERID (2003) states teachers are not likely to use newer techniques/methods if they are not convinced that these can really make a change, or improve the classroom delivery. Such a situation is most likely to occur if the training focuses more on knowledge transmission and there is lack of demonstration and practice during the training. Demonstration and practice are vital tools for the internalization of concepts and use of the skills.

Inability to give up old habits easily. Singh (2007) states that teaching in the English language

was not the usual practice in the class even though the teacher was aware of the fact that the English language needs to be taught in English medium. It is important that if the methods and techniques provided in the training differ from the ones in the practice the teachers need help first to unlearn and overcome old habits. Then only, learning new skills would be useful and relearning exercises would be fruitful (p.54).

Lack of competency on the subject matter. Specifically, some of the English language teachers had problems due to insufficient competence on the subject matter and inability to speak in English. This was easily visible in the observed class in the 'Interactive Radio Instruction' program conducted by Distance Education Center, Sanothimi some years back (NCED,2012). Teachers with a low level of competence could not comprehend the instruction provided and due to this, they were unable to employ useful techniques demonstrated in the 'Interactive Radio Instruction' program (CERID, 2001).

Lack of motivation, indifference on the part of teachers. It is noteworthy that workshop participants showed a lack of motivation and the indifferent attitude of the teachers was one of the major factors for the non-use of training skills in classroom delivery. There was no compulsion for the teachers to use skills they had learned in the absence of follow up, monitoring, reward/punishment or accountability (Singh, 2007).

Confusion due to coverage of too many techniques/activities. Some teachers seemed confused with too many techniques/activities being suggested in the training they receive. They pointed out that there was not sufficient time for internalization and practice. Theory and lecture will not be sufficient (p. 55).

Some inherent problems within the curricular materials. Subject-wise analysis (CERID, July 2002a) indicated problems in the primary level curriculum and in some of the textbooks and teacher guides for the primary level. For example, higher-level curriculum objectives were not adequately addressed in the textbook and teachers' guides in some cases. There were examples and activities such as visiting health post not relevant to the primary level children. In some places, teachers' guide, textbook content exposition was not relevant, such as: the exposition of the concept of bar graph and its use coming in the students' mind in an insightful manner (Singh, 2007).

Escaping behavior of the teachers. According to (Singh, 2007) usual responses for the non-use of training skills are usually related to lacking- lack of materials, time, support, budget, space, conducive home environment, commitment, monitoring, and so on. Crowded classes are another generally indicated problem. These are escaping behaviors of the teachers and an excuse for not using training skills in classroom delivery. However, where there were crowded classes with higher number of students, group work, individual attention, games requiring physical movement etc. were difficult to use (p. 57).

Misconceptions that course need to be covered. Some of the teachers expressed that when activities, games, group work etc. are used it takes a lot of time. In such condition, there might not be sufficient time to complete the course. It is not easy to conclude whether a given course can be covered on time when Teachers' Guide is followed and training skills used. But finishing textbook content even if children do not learn is not agreeable. They had the misconception that course need to be covered even though children do not understand.

Result-oriented focus. Another barrier was the disposition towards obtaining an immediate outcome. Such immediate results can be obtained by memorizing word meaning than word and sounds or memorizing multiplication table than conceptualizing through repetitive addition (Upadhaya, 2014; Thapa, 2012; Singh, 2007).

Remedial Factors in the Transfer of Training Skills

Certain training-related factors seem responsible for not applying training skills in the classroom. They can be categorized as a lack of proper planning to teacher training in the context of local level, lack of competency on the subject matter as well as to address practical problems in the classroom. Four out of eight teachers seemed confused with too many techniques being suggested in the training session. Similarly, untidy school environment, poor classroom conditions, classes being run irregularly and not up to full requirements, and teachers' and students' irregularities are some of the visible aspects of organizational and management problems. Trained teachers are faced with the problem of the lack of opportunities for follow up professional development programs (The MID Study Report 2003, as cited in Singh, 2007).

Wagle (2010) suggested the main indicators of efficiency in the education system, financial investment in education, the percentage of trained teachers, etc. In the context of behaviour indicators of teachers' burnout, he identified that teachers dominated class, did not have their lesson plan while teaching, were found coming late and leaving earlier from their schools, taught from the books, were found free in taking the responsibility of pupils' failure, used lecture method mostly in the class, did not assign homework, looked tired, less enthusiastic and passive while talking to them, had a good relation with new teachers and were not mostly pleased with their head teachers. In the case of female teachers, he also found an additional matter that they are blamed by most of the people for their knitting work in school time (as cited in Thapa, 2012 p. 71).

Besides, non-training factors such as poor physical facilities of the schools, lack of instructional materials, lack of collaborative culture among teachers, lack of financial and educational material support to the children of disadvantaged group, weak monitoring and follow up support from District Education Officers, school head teachers, school supervisors and Resource person have been hindering transfer of training skills in the classroom and PD.

Existing Situation of Transfer of Teacher Training Skills in classroom practice

Application of training in terms of commencing lesson, presenting the subject matter, linking contents to students previous learning experiences, treating students with love and respect, asking questions, undertaking assessment during the lesson, using clear and non-threatening language seem up to the satisfactory level. NCED (2003) stated some truths about skillful teachers such as: be clear about the purpose of teaching, reflect on their own learning while teaching, be wary of standardized models and approaches, expect ambiguity, seek students' background, talk to colleagues and share experiences, trust their own instincts, create diversity in teaching, take risks when needed, acknowledge their own personality, balance support and challenge, recognize the significance of their own actions and view oneself as a helper of learning. Specially, trained teachers were not found to have developed adequate skills to create conducive learning environment and they had no enthusiasm. This shows that the teacher training had no significant effect and they need further support to enhance their classroom performance in these skills (as cited in Upadhaya, 2014, Thapa, 2012, Singh, 2007).

After the implementation of School Sector Reform Program, NCED has designed TPD Module which expected one-month training will be given within five years to all teachers. This training is divided into three phases, the first phase is equal to ten days credit and these ten days training is again divided into three parts; the first part is face to face mode for 5 days between trainer and trainees at TPD hubs, second is self-study exercise which runs for teachers in their own schools for 3 days credit and the third part is instructional counselling run in TPD hubs by mentors and expert instructors and efforts are made to facilitate the teachers over their teaching-learning difficulties. The third part is focused on the issues or problems encountered by teachers during their self-study exercise and is equals for two days credit.TPD is taken as demand-driven training module and tries to

address the teachers' day-to-day on the spots professional problems through the adaptation of the bottom-up approach.

Remedial measures to Maximize Transfer of Training skills in Real Class

Remedial measures to maximize the transfer of learnt training skills in real class are as follows:

- Make them able to apply learnt skill, knowledge, and attitude into real class with full confidence.

- Develop and modify teacher's competence and performance in understanding of child psychology, learner's need, demand, age, level, motivational situation, and diversity of learning.

- Making learnable environment by bridging the gap between teacher's mindset, training and practice. Training is just only for a certain period of time with a particular purpose in order to avoid barrier and build confidence for applying learnt things in learnable way. Similarly, practice is just for application, evaluation, and counting in what level learning outcome is achieved.

- The balance between demand and supply in teacher recruitment by assigning performance in the real class. in order to make a balance between demand and supply in teacher recruitment, there should be an autonomous teacher service commission.

- Develop and enhancement of teacher's method, strategy, style, approach, and techniques in delivering contents into real class. For this, there should be a well managed in-built mechanism.

- Conduct, monitor, and evaluate teacher's induction training for newly appointed teachers.

- The curriculum of teacher education program, practices, strategy, policy, and provision should be reviewed with the latest developments of the society, profession, and globalized world.

- Teacher professional development strategy should be developed. TPD strategies are workshop, seminar, conference, action research, team teaching, teacher support group, analysis critical incidence, mentoring and monitoring.

- Make them proficient in use of newer techniques.

- Enable them to give up old habits

- Enable them to perform and well competent on subject matters.

- Increasing motivation, eradication indifference on the parts of teachers.

- Make a proper scientific workload allocation in schools.

- The government should bring a significant hike in the salary of teachers as per the rising market value and expenses.

Conclusion

This study was highly based on the theoretical, policy document, and research reports and dissertation reviews accompanied by introspective design for examining the researcher's own perception and sensory experience for carrying out this research.

Classroom practices are the actual application of learnt knowledge, skill, and attitude through the training session. There are so many reasons for being unable to apply learnt teacher training into classroom practice including ramification of training skills, unconvinced with newer techniques, inability to give up old habits easily, lack of competency on the subject matter, lack of motivation,

indifferent on the parts of teachers, confusion due to coverage of too many techniques, some inherent problems with the curricular materials, escaping behavior of teachers, misconception that course needs to be covered eventually, and result-oriented focus.

Remedial measure to maximize transfer of learnt training skills in real classes make them able to apply learnt skill, knowledge and attitude with full confidence into real class, develop and modify teachers' competence and performance in understanding of child psychology, making learnable environment by bridging gap between teachers' mindset, training, and practices, balancing between demands and supply in teacher recruitment by assessing performance in real class, development and enhancement of teachers' method, style, approach, and techniques in developing content into real class, conduct, monitor, and evaluate teachers' induction training for newly appointed teachers, the set of courses of teacher education program, practices, strategies, policies, and provisions should be revived with latest development of the society, profession, and globalized world.

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