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EMERGING RESEARCH TRENDS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

It is important to celebrate similarities, as well as discovering differences between students. Refer to the GIHE document "Managing Intercultural Conflict Productively" for suggestions about activities that promote discovery of common interests and shared experiences between students to help build cohesiveness in the group.

Promote computer and information technologies as an easily accessible method of student-lecturer interaction, particularly electronic bulletin boards, course mailing lists, and other online mediums.

At the start of each semester, provide students with some information about your teaching style and instructional methods, perhaps on lecture slides or on your own website. Include details of your cultural background and any cross-cultural teaching, learning or research experiences you have had.

Communicate to your students that you are committed to understanding cultural differences and understanding your own assumptions, values and beliefs associated with diversity. This sends a message to students that culture is valued and respected in the classroom.

Provide opportunities for your students to interact with you informally. Before and after lecturers or tutorials is an ideal time.

GIHE Good Practice Resource Booklet – Designing Culturally Inclusive Learning and Teaching Environments - Classroom Strat

Make an effort to learn something unique about each student. While this is challenging in large tutorials, exercises such as the "name activity" mentioned earlier can help in this regard.

Display positive nonverbal behaviours (e.g., inviting facial expressions, eye contact, posture, hand gestures, physical distance) to ensure you appear approachable to students.

During one-on-one interactions, ask what name or form of address students prefer.

During class discussions, refer to students by name as much as possible.

Correct pronunciation of names is very important, as it demonstrates cultural awareness and respect. Remember – if you are in doubt, check with students.

Eliminate classroom incivilities

•   Establish explicit ground-rules for appropriate classroom conduct to protect against cultural exclusion and insensitivity.

o   Communicate, verbally and non-verbally, high expectations for displaying mutual respect toward all students

o   Encourage students to negotiate an accepted "code of conduct" and set of disciplinary measures for inappropriate classroom behaviour (refer also to the GIHE document "Managing Intercultural Conflict Productively").

•   Respond promptly to any behaviour (verbal or non-verbal) that could be considered prejudiced, biased or discriminatory in nature. Do not tolerate racist, sexists or culturally insensitive comments made by students. Explain Australia's laws in relation to discrimination and the University's Student Charter.

•   Avoid ignoring or neglecting the needs of individual students. For example, ensure you do not have a tendency to favour one group over another when answering questions.

•   Avoid stereotypes and preconceived assumptions in your teaching practices and course content.

•   When presenting information on cultural and linguistic diverse individuals or minority groups, clearly cite published literature and research findings, rather than expressing your personal opinion. Similarly, encourage students to draw on diverse data sources/evide   to develop their arguments and critique op

Meaning and Concept of Innovative Practices in Teacher Education

There is wide variation among countries with regard to what they believe constitutes an innovation, reform or development in the teaching learning process .For example, the use of colored chalk and basic audio –visual materials may be regarded as being as educational innovation in some developing regions, whereas in other more affluent countries innovations may refer to the development and use of sophisticated technologies and methods, practices etc. In our country also, this electronic technology has dramatically penetrated in to every area of our society and every aspect of our social and cultural lives.

There has been a tremendous shift in the ways and means of education services over the years. Research and innovations play an important role in improving the quality of teachers and the training imparted to them for all levels of teaching. They demand to introduce new ideas and practices in classroom transaction and other curricular and co-curricular activities .The teacher's effectiveness can be enhanced with good leadership and appropriate teaching methodologies .The purpose of teacher education is to prepare teachers who have professional competencies to lead the nation forward through their manifold roles.

Innovative Ideas to Make Your Teaching Methods More Effective

The biggest challenge any teacher faces is capturing the students' attention, and putting across ideas in such a way that it stays with them long after they have left the classroom .For this to happen, classroom experience should be redefined and innovative ideas that make teaching methods more effective should be implemented .So here are innovative ideas that will help teachers reinvent their teaching methods and make their classes interesting

    (1) Creative teaching
    (2) Audio & Video Aids
    (3) "Real –World" Learning
    (4) Brainstorm

(5) Classes Outside the Classroom
(6) Role Play
(7) Strong-board Teaching
(8) Stimulating Classroom Environment
(9) Work Together As a Team

Some Innovative Practices in Teacher Education

Following are some of the innovative ideas that need to be focused

1. TeamTeaching, Cooperative or Collaborative learning process:

When teacher and students have to work under so many constraints, then the practice of "Team Teaching or Cooperative or Collaborative teaching is always a good option.

Collaborative learning is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together .It is a method of teaching and learning in which student's team together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project. A group of students discussing a lecture or students from different schools working together over the internet on a shared assignment are both examples of collaborative learning.

2. Reflecting Teaching and Reflective education:

Reflective teaching is a personal tool that teachers can use to observe and evaluate the way they behave in their classroom .It can be both a private process as well as one that you collect information regarding what went on in your classroom and take the time to analyses it from a distance, you can identify more than just what worked and what didn't Reflection refers to the ongoing process of critically examining and refining practice ,taking in to careful consideration the personal ,pedagogical ,societal and ethical contexts associated with schools classrooms and the multiple roles of teachers.

3. Constructivism and Teacher Education

The concept of Constructivism has evolved from cognitive psychology .Constructivist paradigm is based on the contributions of Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner, Dewey, Tolman and many others. Thus, it is synthesis of many dominant perspectives on learning .It is believed that the key element of constructivist theory is that people learn by Innovative Practices in Teacher Education .An Overview Manisha Das Volume –I, Issue –IV .May 2015 17 actively constructing their own knowledge, comparing new knowledge with their previous understanding and using all these to come to new understanding. Constructivist learning is based on student's active participation in problem –solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity .Students construct their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches based on their prior knowledge and experience, applying them to new knowledge and with pre-existing intellectual constructs. The Teacher is a facilitator or a Coach who guides the student's critical thinking ,analysis are synthesis abilities throughout the learning process .The Teacher is also a co-learner in the process .Hence ,teachers should facilitate cognitive change by presenting difficulties through specific tasks that pose dilemmas to students .In this context ,problem –solving teaching procedure is defined as a process of raising a problem in the such a way to stimulate purposeful ,reflective thinking in arriving at a rational solution.

4. Blended –Learning and Teacher Education:

Blended –learning describes an approach to learning where teachers use technology, usually in the form of Web-Based instruction, in concert with and as a supplement to live instruction, or perhaps utilize components of a learner –centered Web course with components that require significant instructor presence and guidance .The strength of a blended –learning approach is that it provides a means to ensure learners are supported and guided as they undertake independent learning tasks .Use of the Web in such settings provides many affordances for the teacher an students in the form of communication channels ,information sources and management tools. These aspects appear to make blended –learning particularly well suited to teacher training students ,especially those in large groups where direct instructor support may be difficult to deliver.

5. Soft skills and Teacher Education:

Development of human capital is an important asset since it drives the development of a nation. Quality human capital comes from quality education process through carefully designed and well – planned education system .Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interaction, job performance and career prospects and hard skills which tend to be specific to a certain type of task or activity .Soft skills refer to personality traits, socialgracefulness, and fluency in language, personalhabits,friendliness and optimism that mark people to varying degrees .Soft skills are broadly applicable in teacher education programmed, thus the curriculum of teacher education could contribute to the development of a holistic human capital that can foster economic ,social and personal development .Infusing the soft –skill in the curriculum of teacher education is the need of the profession for it to be successful.

Problems of Raising the Standard of Teacher Education

Very many factors are included in the standard of teacher education at any level –its aims, its Curriculum, its institutions, the teacher working in the institutions and the product of the teacher education institutions. The most important factor of all these is the product. This is the real touchstone of the standard of teacher education. Whereas the reality at present is that the product of teacher education at any level is not up to the mark .The teachers coming out of these institutions possess neither insight not attitude towards education and teaching, nor the skill of training in activities. Lack of honesty and of devotion to duty has become an endemic disease of the country, and if it is found among the teachers, coming out of these institutions, then it is not they but the entire society and the controlling agency is to be blamed.

Initiative steps of Innovation in Teacher Education system

NPE (1986) stated "The existing system of teacher education needs to be overhauled or revamped." This has resulted in a number of initiatives being launched and they are-

-Establishment of NCTE by the government of India on August 17, 1995 as a statutory body responsible for the regulatory as well as professional aspects of teacher education.

-Programmed of Mass Orientation of School teachers (PMOST) was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in all the states and Union Territories during 1986-1990.

-Special Orientation Programmed for Primary Teachers (SOPT) was taken up in 1993-94 to provide orientation to primary school teachers.

-In the light of recommendations of NPE 1986, Block and Cluster Resource Centers were established for professional growth of elementary school teachers and heads.

-Interactive teleconferencing has been successfully tried in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in in – service training course.

-Three National Curriculum frameworks on Teacher Education have been brought out by the National council of Teacher Education (1978, 1988 and 1998).

-To acquire ICT literacy, the NCTE has produced a CD-ROM entitled 'IT Literacy.'

-NCTE has developed self-learning modules on 'Human Rights and National Values' with a view to familiarize entrant teachers with values enshrined in our constitution.

Suggestions:

Theabove observations clearly indicate that teacher education programme at secondary level needs to be examined critically in terms of its innovativeness .Here are some suggestions which can be used to overcome these problems .

-Identification of the Innovative research could be done if all the Departments of Educations Countryside contribute in this area .They may periodically produce the Research Abstracts of the Studies conducted in their respective Departments, which may be made available on the World Wide Web.

-Every Teacher Educator may be given Unique Identification Number .It will facilitate Manpower Planning in Teacher Education.

-There should be networking amongst all the Teacher Education. Institutions to learn from the innovative practices of each other.

-Efforts should be made to realize holistic Teacher Education by integrating various skills, suchas, microteaching, info –savvy, techno –pedagogic, life skills in the various Teacher Education Programs .Along with cognitive development there should be adequate focus on emotional maturity, psycho-motor development, health and environment, and inter –disciplinary development.

-It is imperative to strengthen Vocational Teacher Education in almost all the domains of vocational Education, such as, agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, servicing of the electric and electronic appliances. Innovative approaches need to be evolved.

-Physical facilities and funds should be adequately provided to the institutions by the government, local bodies and organizations .The internship model of practice teaching should be adopted.