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Teacher Preparation for E-Based Classrooms: Problems Practices and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of a new e-based classroom is being witness throughout the world. Rapid progresses in the area of micro electronics and space technology have contributed substantially to time phenomenon. Schools and classroom practices are giving proper attention to the preparation of teachers and the proper pedagogy and suitable methodology to be adopted in the e-based classroom instruction to transform the appropriate information in a concrete manner. The destiny of the nation is shaped only in the classrooms. A good teacher can bring the entire world to the classroom. As many research studies had revealed that the caliber of the teachers has tremendous impact on the caliber of the students. The present paper discusses a little about the teachers preparation for e-based classrooms. It is an attempt to highlight the problem, practices and prospects of teacher's preparations for e-based classroom.

Key Words*: E-Based Classroom, E-Learning, ICT, E-Lecture, Teacher Education, Globalization*.

1.0 Introduction

Drastic changes have taken place in the educational scenario in the last twenty years of the country. Issues of revolutionary technological innovations, privatization of education, cross border education and several unforeseen aspects of education are coming up on a daily basis to challenge the professional Prowers of teachers. Not only that several innovative concepts, techniques and technology have come up in he field of education. The Government of India's National Policy on Education (1986) rightly pointed out that the "Modern Communication Technologies have the potential to bypass several stages and sequences in the process of development encountered in earlier decades. Both the constraints of time and distance at once become manageable''. The emergence of e-based classroom has further facilitated the wide adoption of learner centered education and other changes in educational practices. Kelly and Bauer (2004) point out that E-learning has drawn significance attention from educational institutions, educational software developers and business organizations due to the potential educational and cost benefit. Such e-based classroom learning benefits has reduced educational cost, consistency, timely content, flexible accessibility and convenience. In the present context, e-based classroom learning can at best be complementary or supplementary to the congenital learning training.

2.0 E-Based Classroom Learning: An Innovation

An Innovation Integration of technology into classroom is inevitable now a day. The influence of Information and communication Technology (ICT) does not merely manifest in the changes in instructional tools, but more importantly in in-depth revolution in educational throughts, instructional ideas, learning contents and teaching methods (He and Ma, 2005). The introduction of ICT in teaching has opened new horizons for teachers to have more interactive and learner – centered classroom environment. This technological advancement have led to the emergence of numerous learning management systems which have almost made it mandatory on instructors to acquaint themselves and utilize these new media in their pedagogical instructions. In an educational framework, e-based classroom teaching may be utilized for designing e-learning, but also for supporting learners to efficiently navigate through learning materials. Moreover, e-based classroom teaching can be used for deriving prerequisite structure among learning objects and competencies, which can form the basis of adoptive e-learning system. Huon Spehar, Adam and Rifkin (2007) found that a popular approach consists in delivering practice quizzes, lecture notes and other course materials through web-based applications. However, the impact of such materials in undergraduate learning is not well establishing yet. On the other hand, there is evidence that frequent users of web-based classroom practice quizzes perform better in final exam. Kekkonen–Moneta and Moneta (2002) argued that web-based lectures might foster high order learning outcomes by providing students with interactive multimedia rich information. Azevedo (2005) highlight that computer based

learning environments (CBLEs) are becoming more prevalent in the classroom and have been used to help students learn about challenging topics. King and Robinson (2009) remarks that EVS (Electronic Voting System) is a technology that affords a lecture the means to give students, especially in a large class the chance to engage with course materials by having them answer questions in class with immediate feedback provided. There are two broad types of EVs system in use-infra red Evs and radio EVs. Infra red EVs has a limited range that is, such systems can only be used with classes of a predetermined capacity, usually user 100 students. Radio technology is much more robust and can be used in classes with more than 100 students, depending on the institutional need and the EVs vendor capacity. Jibin and Naseema (2011) state that Tablet PC is typically used in the classroom as a presentation device that takes the place of the blackboard. They further point out that with products such as Microsoft OneNote, PowerPoint, or Journal, an instructor has the ability to prepare lecture material in advance or write "on the fly" during class as one would write on a blackboard. Hence the e-based classroom is widespread with the advent and prevalence of the ICT.

3.0 Role of Teachers in E-based Classroom learning

In this era of globalization, the teachers have to change their roles to support the learning needs of students. Rymbai (2011) suggests that the world of today is in the grip of information cum communication technology and the teachers need to be proficient in using e-teaching learning strategies via: E-lecturing, E-Discussion, E-Mentoring, E-Tutoring, E-Access to network, E-Structured resource group activity, E-Informal peer interaction etc. The role of the teacher assumes greater significance in the e-based classroom scenario. The destiny of the nation is shaped only in the classrooms. The task of the teacher in e-based classroom has many dimensions : it involves the provision of broad context of knowledge management within which students can locate and understand the e-content of their more specific studies, it involves the creation of a e-learning environment in which students are encouraged to think carefully and critically ; and express their thoughts ; it involves constantly monitoring and reflecting on the process of e-teaching and student understanding and seeking to improve them. Therefore, Kothari Commission Report (1964–66) emphasized the crucial role of the teachers in educational reforms.

4.0. Teacher Preparation for E-based Classroom

The whole process of education is shaped and moulded by a personality called the teacher who plays a pivotal role in any system of education. Educational progress depends upon the quality of teachers. National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE, 1998) states, "A Teachers in the technological age must have commitment to learner, commitment to the society, commitment to the profession, commitment to achieve excellence and commitment to basic human values. Thus, a teacher should be equipped with modern competence to work effectively to cater to the needs of information seeking society, to prove himself or herself as knowledge worker".

4.1. Practice of Teacher Preparation for E-based Classroom

The need for an intensive training programme for the new entrants to the teaching profession was recognized way back in the year 1949 by the Radhakrishnan Commission, 1964-66 by Kothari Commission and later on in 1986 by the National Policy on Educational. However, it was only after 1986 that a response to these needs was concretized in the form of Academic staff colleges - institutions providing in–service training to teachers. The Academic staff Colleges being run for university teachers, teacher education institutions for primary, secondary levels and various in-service training programmes and especially teacher education curriculum as visualized in the XI plan document of Government of India may immensely benefit the teacher educates and teacher education institution for organizing and redesigning their courses and programmes of studies. The NCF (2005) as prepared by NCERT and Teacher Education Curriculum (2009) of NCTE have also reinforced these ideas in so far as they advocate constructivist approach to be followed in designing of curriculum, development of effective teaching learning paradigms and objective referenced formative evaluation. The search for needed competencies for making a competent and effective teacher is a continuous and perennial process. It requires introduction and encouragement of innovative practices, creative handling of teaching–learning situation and a careful and vigilant system of evaluation followed by pragmatic feedback devices. Revamping Teacher Education to reorient and train the teachers to the emerging ICT enabled teaching / learning culture to meet the educational demands is a top priority and challenge for Government of developing and under developed countries. Some of the Tech-Mode strategies emerged and adopted successfully for teacher education are worth mentioning like; Teacher e-Education (TeE) China, Interactive Radio Instruction for in-service teachers in South Africa, Community Radio for school and teacher education and using cell phones to enhance teacher education .

4.2. Problems of Teacher Preparation for E-based Classroom

Teachers are shapers of the modern world. They play a leading role in transforming the children into responsible global citizens by facilitating them acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Pandit (2011) States that many people prefer teaching career for reasons like fixed suitable timing, stability and a status in a civil society. But, in the process of globalization, the problems identified in teaching career are heavy workload, poor working environment, lack of continuous training and support, gender and ethnic biases and disparities in working conditions in rural urban areas are the reasons for teacher career getting diluted and less attractive leading to the worlds teachers gap. On the other hand, the interesting observation is the emerging technology based new trends and demands of the trained teachers of 21st century looking for alternate flexible teaching leaving methods and skill training opportunities for their capacity building and livelihood.Some of the major problems associated with the preparation of teachers for e-based classroom are :-

- Lack of IT infrastructure facilities.
- Lack of structures. Mechanisms and adopted adequate processes in teachers training programme.
- Lack of support and opportunities available to teachers in beginning and for continuous training to make teachers a more effective and efficient professional for e-based classroom.
- Lack of financial provisions.
- Lack of ICT awareness.
- Lack of motivation.
- Lack of Governmental/Other Organizational adequate policies and programmes in context of teacher preparation for e-based classroom.

4.3. Prospects of teacher preparation for E-based Classroom.

E-based classroom technologies of today have enabled digital learning resources that enhance the teaching learning experience of students, teachers and academic communities from different fields. Gokhala and Chandra (2009) point out that e-learning in the wider perspective connotes knowledge centric rather a course centric approach allowing the students to query the knowledge based to learn better. Number of countries are utilizing cell phones, virtual environment, video conferencing, web-based internet media for enhancing pre-service teacher's professional identify, field placements, improving teachers perceptions etc. most of the review studies should that teachers support e-based classroom due to its benefits in terms of improved classroom management, teaching practices. E-based teacher training programme if utilize in a creative approach is a highly potential medium for training and capacity building of pre-service and in-service teachers.

5.0. Conclusion and Suggestions

To address the crisis of trained teachers for e-based classroom, countries of world over need to revisit the entire policies and process of teacher Education Training along with concerned curricula, Keeping in view the new ICT, that are changing world education scenario. The teacher education curriculum and training need to integrate the concept and skills of e-based classroom teaching learning process. The Government / Other agencies require adopting a multi pronged approach to meet the requirement of quality teacher by creating complementary alternative and integrated learning environments to meet the e-based classroom teaching.

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