

TEACHER PROFICIENCY OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

The present study is on teacher proficiency of teacher educators. Teacher proficiency refers to one who possesses the skill, ability, talent, expertise, competence, mastery, dexterity and aptitude in their profession. Teacher proficiency is the outcome of a process that begins with teacher preparation programs that are guided by curriculum organizations, state departments of public instruction, organizations that certify schools of education, and research in education. The study has been conducted in Trichy district and normative survey method has been selected for collecting data. The investigator has selected 172 teachers working in B.Ed colleges. The random sampling technique has been adopted for selecting sample. The tool teacher proficiency scale was constructed and developed by the investigator was used. The results of the study found that the teacher educators have average level of proficiency score. Also it is found that there is no significant difference between teacher proficiency of male and female teacher educators. Further the teacher educators differ significantly among themselves in relation to their experience, qualifications and usage of teaching aids.

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Introduction:

Teacher plays an important role to make the students as good citizens and social well being. A good teacher has always been a good role model for the students. Teachers act as gold smith to mould students abilities and characteristics. Such kind of teachers are formed and trained by teacher educators through teacher preparation programme. Proficient teacher educators are responsible for making efficient teachers.

In education, the term proficiency is used in a variety of ways, most commonly in reference to (1) proficiency levels, scales, and cut-off scores on standardized tests and other forms of assessment, (2) students achievement or failing to achieve proficiency levels determined by tests and assessments, (3) students demonstrating or failing to demonstrate proficiency in relation to learning standards and (4) teachers being deemed proficient or non-proficient on job-performance and evaluations.

Proficiency refers to advancement in knowledge or skill. It is denoted that the state or quality of being proficient. Teacher proficiency refers to teachers' skill and overall performance during their academic life. Teacher proficiency could be defined as mastery of a specific behavior or skill demonstrated by consistently superior performance, measured against established or popular standards. In common man's language, it could be stated that skills which are prerequisite for teachers.

The fundamental requirements for proficient teaching are relatively clear: a broad grounding in the liberal arts and sciences; knowledge of the subjects to be taught, of the skills to be developed, and of the curricular arrangements and materials that organize and embody that content; knowledge of general and subject-specific methods for teaching and for evaluating student learning; knowledge of students and human development; skills in effectively teaching students from racially, and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds; and the skills, capacities and dispositions to employ such knowledge wisely in the interest of students. This enumeration suggests the broad base for expertise in teaching but conceals the complexities, uncertainties and dilemmas of the work. Teaching ultimately requires judgment, improvisation, and conversation about means and ends.

Need and Importance of the Study

Students' achievements are influenced by some factors such as teachers' education and experience, subject matter knowledge, teaching and learning practices, cognitive ability and teaching behaviour in the classroom are related to teacher quality. Researchers also suggested that quality teachers possess some intangible features, such as teachers' expectations for their students, the belief in their own abilities or their ability to connect with students that affect teacher effectiveness and therefore student achievement. Meroni et.al., 2015, showed that how teachers' skills seem to have positive effects on student achievement and explained part of the variation between countries in students' achievement. Teachers with subject-specific master's degrees are more effective than those without such degrees (Goldhaber and Brewer, 1998). Goldhaber and Brewer, 2000: also found that teacher certification is systematically related to student achievement. Rivkin et.al., 2005, found that increase in teacher effectiveness after about five years of experience. Monk, 1994: using data on 2829 students from the Longitudinal Study of American Youth, found that teachers' content preparation, measured by coursework in the subject field, is positively related to student achievement. Another important finding is that teachers who possess strong pedagogical content knowledge are more effective than those with content knowledge alone (Baumert et al., 2010). However Hanushek, 1971: showed that teachers' verbal ability contributes to increased student academic performance.

The usage of the technological tools in education is becoming more important in present scenario. Technology which is now an indispensable part of education has mostly become the core of learning and development for young children (Wright and Shade, 1994). So the teachers should have sufficient skills in using technology in their class rooms. Tezer and Ertarkan, 2010: showed that, the proficiency of use of technology among teachers differs in relation to their years of service. Thus it is the task of the proficient teacher educators to produce their student teachers as discussed above. Teacher educators are people "who provide instruction or who give guidance and support to student teachers, and who thus render a substantial contribution to the development of students into competent teachers" (Koster et al., 2005). They are ones who are responsible for quality of teachers that go into schools that in turn directly impacts quality of education. The teacher educators should equip them with necessary expertise so that they can

build required knowledge and skills in the student teachers to enable them to succeed in teaching profession. Hence the investigator intended to explore the proficiency of teacher educators.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the level of teacher proficiency of teacher educators. .
2. To infer the significant difference, if any, in teacher proficiency of teacher educators belonging to different sub samples (gender, educational qualification, experience, frequency of using teaching aids).

Hypotheses of the Study

1. The level of teacher proficiency of teacher educators is high.
2. There is no significant difference in teacher proficiency of teacher educators belonging to different sub samples (gender, educational qualification, experience, frequency of using teaching aids).

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The present study was conducted in education colleges affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Tamil Nadu state, India. From 727 B.Ed colleges, 34 B.Ed colleges situated in Trichy district were selected for the present study by using convenience sampling technique. Samples of 172 teacher educators were selected by using simple random sampling technique from 34 B.Ed colleges.

Tool

Teacher proficiency scale was constructed and developed by the investigator was used the present investigation to assess teachers' proficiency. It contains 42 items with five point scale. The items of the scale consist of factors related to communication, continuous improvement, diversity, critical thinking, ethics, human development and learning, knowledge of subject matter, learning environment, planning and role of the teacher. The range of scores for teacher proficiency is from 42 to 210 with the higher score indicates high teacher proficiency.

Statistical Technique

For analysing data 't' and 'F' test, is used.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Descriptive Analysis

The teacher proficiency mean scores of the total teacher educators were analysed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation for Teacher Proficiency of Teacher Educators

Variable	Total Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teacher proficiency	172	125.05	11.13

It is inferred from Table 1 that the mean and standard deviation of whole sample for teacher proficiency is 125.05 and 11.13. The various levels of teacher proficiency of teacher educators are given in Table 2.

Table 2: The various levels of teacher proficiency of teacher educators

S. No	Score range	N	Percentage	Level
1.	Above 147	0	0	Very high
2.	136-146	33	19.18%	High
3.	115-135	97	56.39%	Average
4.	104-114	38	22.11%	Low
5.	Below 103	4	2.32%	Very low

It is clear from the Table 2 that among the total 172 teacher educators, 33(19.18%) are having high level teacher proficiency, 97(56.39%) are having average level teacher proficiency, 38(22.11%) are having low level and 4(2.32%) are having very low teacher proficiency. The maximum numbers of teacher educators (97) have obtained average level in their teacher proficiency.

Differential Analysis

To find out the significant difference between the mean score of gender and teaching experience of teacher educators in their teacher proficiency, 't' test has been found out and presented in Table 3.

Table – 3: 't' Value for the Teacher Proficiency Mean Score of Gender and Teaching Experience of Teacher educators

Sub samples		N	M	SD	t-value	level of significance
Gender	Male	89	125.61	10.69	0.675	Not significant at 0.05
	Female	83	124.46	11.62		
Teaching experience	Below 10 years	129	122.44	8.92	5.814	Significant at 0.01
	Above 10 years	43	132..88	13.35		

It is clear from the Table-3 that, obtained't' value 0.675 is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the male and female teacher educators do not differ significantly in their teacher proficiency.

Also it is clear from the Table-3 that, obtained't' value 5.814 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that the below 10 and above 10 years experience of teacher educators differ significantly in their teacher proficiency scores. Teacher educators those who have above 10 years teaching experience scored higher mean score than teacher educators who have below 10 years teaching experience.

The teacher proficiency scores of M.Ed with or without SLET/NET, M.Phil and Ph.D qualification of teacher educators were analyzed and the details are presented in Table 4

Table 4: Analysis of Variance for M.Ed with or without SLET/NET, M.Phil and Ph.D Qualification of Teacher Educators on Teacher Proficiency Scores

Teacher proficiency scores	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F- Value	Level of significance
Between Groups	858.414	2	429.207	3.566	Significant at 0.05
Within Groups	20340.116	169	120.356		

It is evident from the Table 4. that the 'F' value obtained is 3.566 and it is found to be higher than the table value of 3.06. It may be inferred that the teacher educators belonging to different qualification differ significantly among themselves in respect of their teacher proficiency scores. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

As the obtained 'F' value was significant, 't' – test has been applied to find out the significant difference between the mean values of M.Ed with or without SLET/NET, M.Phil and Ph.D qualification teacher educators and the results are presented in Table 5

Table 5: 't' Value for the Teacher Proficiency of Mean Scores of M.Ed with or without SLET/NET, M.Phil And Ph.D Qualification of Teacher Educators

Qualification	N	Mean	S.D	't' value	Level of significance
M.Ed with or without SLET/NET	90	123.20	9.19	1.438	Not significant
M.Phil	47	125.70	10.51		
M.Ed with or without SLET/NET	90	123.20	9.19	2.856	Significant at 0.01
Ph.D	35	128.94	15.07		
M.Phil	47	125.70	10.51	1.147	Not significant
Ph.D	35	128.94	15.07		

It is evident from Table 5 that the obtained 't' values for M.Ed with or without SLET/NET, and M.Phil, M.Ed with or without SLET/NET and Ph.D, M.Phil and Ph.D are 1.438, 2.856 and 1.147 respectively. The 't' value of M.Ed with or without SLET/NET and M.Phil, M.Phil and Ph.D teacher educators is lower than the table value of 1.96. The 't' value of M.Ed with or without SLET/NET and Ph.D teacher educators is higher than the table value of 2.58. It may therefore, be inferred that the different qualification of teacher educators differ significantly in their teacher proficiency.

The teacher proficiency scores of teacher educators those who are using teaching aids always, rarely and often were analyzed and the details are presented in Table 6

Table 6: Analysis of Variance for the Teacher Proficiency Scores of Teacher Educators those who are Using Teaching Aids Always, Rarely and Often

Teacher proficiency scores	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F- Value	Level of significance
Between Groups	820.869	2	410.435	3.404	Significant at 0.05
Within Groups	20377.660	169	120.578		

It is evident from the Table 6. that the obtained 'F' value is 3.404 and it is found to be higher than the table value of 3.06. It may be inferred that the teacher educators belonging to different frequency of using teaching aids differ significantly among themselves in respect of their teacher proficiency scores. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

As the obtained 'F' value was significant, 't' – test has been applied to find out the significant difference between the mean values of teacher educators those who are using teaching aids always, rarely and often and the results are presented in Table 7

Table 7: ‘t’ value for the teacher proficiency of mean scores of teacher educators those who are using teaching aids always, rarely and often

Frequency of using	N	Mean	S.D	‘t’ value	Level of significance
Always	46	122.78	8.28	0.208	Not significant
Rarely	45	123.27	13.37		
Rarely	45	123.27	13.37	1.852	Not Significant
Often	81	127.33	10.86		
Always	46	122.78	8.28	2.462	Significant at 0.05
Often	81	127.33	10.86		

It is evident from Table 7 that the obtained ‘t’ values for always and rarely, rarely and often, always and often are 0.208, 1.852 and 2.462 respectively. The ‘t’ value of always and often using teaching aids teacher educators is higher than the table value of 1.96. It may therefore, be inferred that the different frequency of using teaching aids of teacher educators differ significantly in their teacher proficiency.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. The level of teacher proficiency of teacher educator is average.
2. The male and female teacher educators are do not differ significantly in their teacher proficiency scores.
3. The teacher educators’ teaching experiences with below 10 years and above 10 years differ significantly in their teacher proficiency scores.
4. The teacher educators belonging to different qualification differ significantly among themselves in respect of their teacher proficiency scores.
5. The teacher educators belonging to different frequency of using teaching aids differ significantly among themselves in respect of their teacher proficiency scores.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study clearly indicates that the teacher educators have average level of teacher proficiency. Also it is found that the teacher educators those who have above 10 years teaching experience have higher teacher proficiency than teacher educators who have below 10 years teaching experience. In consonance with this finding the investigation made by Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) also indicated that experience plays a significant role in teacher effectiveness. In addition, it is found that the teacher educators those who have pursued Ph.D degree have higher teacher proficiency than teacher educators with post graduate degree. Similar observation has also been made by Goldhaber and Brewer, (1998 & 2000) who have concluded that teachers with high degrees are more effective than those without such degrees. Moreover the result of the present study reveals that the use of teaching aids among teacher educators differ significantly in respect of their teacher proficiency. In support of this, Tezer, M., and Ertarkan, Z., (2010) have reported that teachers differ in their use of technology.

Further, a report published by Confederation of Indian Industry (2013) said that there exists a variation in salary available to teacher educators in Government and private teacher education institutes. In another study, Kingdon, G.G., & Teal, F., (2006) argued that performance related pay for teachers does improve the students performance. Additionally, Rusu, A., S., & et.al, (2015) investigated the impact of an online Service Learning (S-L) tutoring program on developing competencies associated with S-L at the tutees level. Results suggested that student teachers attitudes towards diversity significantly increased after participation in the tutoring program. Also found an association between service activities and increased academic performance. Considering these views, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. In Tamilnadu, most of the teacher education institutes are self financing. Therefore to enhance teacher educators' proficiency, the institutes should pay additionally based on their performance.
2. Teacher educators need to have experience in teaching during the M.Ed degree which is currently the only qualification required to become a teacher educator.
3. The institutes should arrange training programmes for developing pedagogical skills of teacher educators with latest technology in teaching.

4. Service-Learning is becoming a powerful educational tool that helps students emerge from the theoretical world to the world of practice by linking community-service with academic content through learning objectives (Rusu, A.,S., & et.al, 2015). Therefore the management should conduct Service-Learning tutoring programme for developing competencies like civic actions, interpersonal problem solving skills, attitudes of diversity and self-efficacy of teacher educators.

5. Open-house sessions where teachers can create lessons and invite colleagues and teachers from other institutes to observe and provide feedback on their teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

Proficient teachers create effective teaching and learning experiences for their students. They know the unique backgrounds of their students and adjust their teaching methods to meet their individual needs and diverse cultural, social and linguistic characteristics. They develop safe, positive and productive learning environments where all students are encouraged to participate.

Proficient teachers are team members. They work collaboratively with colleagues; they seek out and are responsive to advice about educational issues affecting their teaching practice. They communicate effectively with their students, colleagues, parents/carers and community members. They behave professionally and ethically in all forums. Therefore this study hopes that it gives a light among glowing candles in education stand.

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