

A STUDY OF THE AWARENESS ABOUT STUDY GROUPS AMONG THE TEACHER-EDUCATORS

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Abstract:

Within the scope of a professional growth plan, teachers and school administrators can undertake a range of professional learning activities including reading professional journals, trying out new practices in the classroom and joining professional organizations. Below is a list of professional development activities that can be undertaken individually or collaboratively as a part of professional development plan. In the past, professional development focused on individual development, workshops, in-services and external delivery systems. Today, the emphasis is on school-based activities such as coaching, partnerships and team/group development etc.

Teacher education is a diverse field, covering numerous subjects and various methods of teaching. Teaching in any field is demanding and is a challenging task. Beyond regular education, some people choose to follow specialized paths, such as early childhood education or special education. These teachers need extra educational background in order to be certified to deal with their specific students. These teachers need to have extensive patience and be friendly with toddlers. Innovative play way methods need to be adopted to ensure continuing interest among kids.

Ultimately, the goal of teacher education is to provide future teachers – or teachers looking to further develop their teaching ability – with the skills they need to convey essential information to their students. The training they will require depends on many factors, including the age group, subjects, and type of school they will be teaching in.

In this present research researcher has decided to study the awareness about study group & try to find out problems which arise in using study groups among teacher-educators.

Introduction:-

Study groups involve small groups of educators who meet regularly to work on a predetermined project. This approach to professional development benefits both teachers and administrators by bringing colleagues together to undertake in a group setting a task that they would normally do in

isolation. The optimum size for a study group is about six so that each participant is equally responsible for the success of the group.

Commitment to a study group is greatly enhanced when participants are directly involved in setting the task and its parameters. Whether the task chosen is implementing a new curriculum, researching theories of teaching and learning, or studying strategies for school administration, the group must stay focused on its purpose- to create an environment conducive to student learning. The study group provides the structure, the participants concentrate on content.

To implement a study group, follow these steps:

1. Define the task.
2. Set regular meeting times and places.
3. Establish appropriate meeting behaviors.
4. Create an action plan.
5. Choose a shared decision-making process.
6. Contemplate appropriate leadership roles.
7. Promote a climate of shared commitment.
8. Consider logistics of time, space and money.
9. Discuss criteria for achieving and evaluating goals.

As the work of the study group progresses, participants may decide to redefine goals or to invite a specialist to attend a scheduled meeting. Study groups work best in a collaborative environment that allows for intellectual exchange and shared experience.

Meaning of Study Groups:-

A study group is a small group of people who regularly meet to discuss shared fields of study. These groups can be found in high school and college setting, within companies, occasionally primary/junior school and sometimes Middle School/Intermediate. Professional advancement organizations also may encourage study groups.

Each group is unique and draws on the background and abilities of its members to determine the material that will be covered. Often, a leader who is not actively studying the material will direct group activities. Some colleges actively set up a study group programs for students to sign up. Typical college level academic groups include 5 – 20 students and an administrator or tutor drawn from the graduate program or an upperclassman. Professional groups are often smaller.

Need of Study Groups:-

Education often looks like competition. Students compete for entrance into school or college and for grades when they are in school. As a result, it is easy to overlook the power of cooperation.

There will be days when you just don't want to work at your education. Other members of a study support group can give you encouragement. More importantly, you are more likely to keep an appointment to study with a group than to study by yourself. If you declare your intention to study with others and know they are depending on you, your intention will gain strength.

When studying in groups it will be helpful to do the following:

1. Test each other by asking questions. Each group member can agree to bring four or five test questions to each meeting. Then you can all take a test made from these Questions.
2. Practice teaching each other. Teaching is a great way to learn something. When you teach something you naturally take on a teachers' attitude of "I know this," as opposed to a students' attitude of " I still have to learn this." The vocalization involved in teaching further reinforces your memory.
3. Compare notes to make sure you all heard the same thing in class and that you all recorded the important information. Ask other students about material in your notes that is unclear to you.
4. Limit group to five or six people. Test the group first by planning a one-time-only session. If that session works, plan another. After several successful sessions, you can schedule regular meetings.
5. Conduct open – ended discussions and debates designed to produce understanding and insight.
6. Take advantage of group support in personal areas. Other people often have insight into your problems involving transportation, childcare, finances, time scheduling, or other barriers you may experience in getting what you want from school.
7. Set an agenda for each meeting. Select the items from the above list or create other activities that you will do as a group. Set approximate times for each agenda item and determine a quitting time. End each meeting with assignments for each member. Remember that consistency is important in reaching your desired goal.

Importance Of Study Groups:-

The study group can be one of the best places to get questions answered about confusing/difficult course material. Quite often, as there is strength in numbers, some member of the study group will understand some of the material, and others will find other elements of the course understandable. Taking turns in explaining the difficult parts helps build confidence in all the members. And when no one understands it, the study group leader can step in to provide direction. The study group allows for a good course review. Even when a student understands the material, it is good to review the material by explaining it to someone else. For this reason, it is good idea to encourage students to take on the responsibility of teaching each other, and to not simply rely on the study group leader for assistance.

This actually helps all members develop self discipline, by sticking to a schedule. It also builds a sense of community and shared responsibility and accountability. A study group depends upon the participation of all of its members to reach its full potential.

Importance of Teacher Educators Evaluation:-

- It is Useful for teacher educator's professional development.
- It is helpful to identify the strength and weakness of the teacher educator.
- It is useful for improve the teaching strategy.
- It motivates the teacher educator for further development.
- It supports to develop the quality in teacher education.
- It is useful for effective teacher education in present scenario.
- It is helpful to give proper guideline to the teacher educator.
- It is useful for self awareness of the teacher educator.

It allows teacher-educator to rate himself based on a number of parameters.

Statement of Problem:-

A study of awareness about study groups among teacher-educators in M.Ed. colleges affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University.

Objectives:-

1. To study the awareness about the importance of study groups among teacher-educators.
2. To study the awareness about the use of study groups among teacher-educators.
3. To study the problems of the teacher-educators while using the study groups.
4. To find out the reasons of unawareness about the study groups.

Assumptions:-

- Study groups are the important tool of evaluation.
- For the professional development of teacher-educators study groups are most useful.

Need & Importance:-

No human being is perfect in the same way, no teacher is perfect but one can do try to achieve perfection for that there is a need to know the ones shortcomings. For that a person must evaluate own self. So for the professional development there is a need of self evaluation. Thus it is important to know the awareness about the self evaluation tool.

This research is useful to understand the awareness of study groups among the teacher-educator. Present research study is needful for getting the reasons of unawareness about the study groups.

Scope:-

- This research has studied the awareness about study groups among teacher-educators.
- This research is focused on self evaluation.
- This research is related to M.Ed. colleges affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University.
- This research is related to teacher-educators.

Limitations:-

- This research is restricted to only M.Ed. level teacher-educators.
- This research is only related to study groups.
- This research study is limited to four colleges only.

Methodology:-

For this presented research study researcher has been selected survey research method. The survey method gather data from a respectively large number of cases at a particular time, it is not concerned with characteristics of individual as individual it is concerned with the generalized statistic that result, when data are abstract from a number of individual cases. It is essentially cross-sectional.

Research Tool:-

There is various research tools like questionnaire, verbal interviews, observation, rating scale, inventories are used mostly to collect the data in survey method depending upon the type of survey. To find out the awareness about study groups among teacher-educators, researcher used study groups – Questionnaire made by self for data collection. This Questionnaire has 24 questions related to four aspects of study groups i.e. collection, reflection, reduction and display. This Questionnaire was standardized by eight (8) educationalist and teacher-educators in Pune region.

Population:-

For this present research all M.Ed. colleges which affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University are selected as a population.

Sample:-

Out of above population researcher has selected four M.Ed. colleges. It means total 04 colleges are selected by researcher & from that five (5) teacher-educators are selected from each M.Ed. College by lottery sample selection method. It means total 20 teacher – educators are selected as sample.

Statistical Parameter:-

Researcher has used the Percentage as a statistical parameter for analyze and interpretation of the collected data.

Major Findings:-

1. Very few teacher-educators are aware about the importance of study groups.
2. Most of the teacher-educators are not aware about the use of study groups.
3. Most of the teacher-educators are unable to plan for study groups due to lack of information.
4. Most of the teacher-educators think that study groups is a difficult tool of evaluation.
5. Most of the teacher-educators are unmotivated for using study groups.
6. Most of the teacher-educators are unaware about the aspects of study groups due to lack of guidance.

Recommendations:-

1. Teacher-educators should aware about the importance of study groups.
2. Teacher-educators should get the detail information about the use of study groups.
3. Teacher-educators should conduct research for solving problems related to study groups.
4. Educational institutions should conduct training courses for teacher-educators to prepare study groups.
5. Teacher-educators should get the detail information about the stages of study groups.
6. Teacher-educators must participate the programs/ conferences/ seminars/ symposiums related to study groups.
7. Teacher-educators should be motivated to maintain the study groups.
8. Educational institute should give the promotion/benefits to the disserving teacher-educator according to the evaluation.

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