Exploring Classroom Interaction Of Professionally Qualified And Unqualified Teachers In Government Secondary Schools: A Comparative Case Study From Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

A comparative case study was conducted to explore the practices of classroom interaction (CI) of professionally qualified and professionally unqualified teachers. Data was collected from three professionally qualified and three professionally unqualified teachers using semi-structured interview, classroom observation, focus group discussion, and field notes as data collection tools. Professionally qualified teachers were named as case one while professionally unqualified teachers were named case two. Data was gathered around three domains of class interaction i.e. classroom organization, emotional support, and instructional support. Data around the domain of classroom organisation revealed that the participants of both cases inculcate different classroom management techniques to promote classroom interaction except time management where participants of case two were facing issues as compared to case one. Around the domain of instructional supports both cases prefer to use variety of teaching techniques like discussion, questioning, individual work, and group work. However, participants of case one used formative assessment techniques to engage students while in case two formative assessment practices were not consistent during teaching and learning process. Around the domain of emotional support both cases were positive to build good relationship with students but the participants of case two were unaware regarding critical dimensions of teacher-student relationship. The study also found that lack of proper space, resources, and technology as hurdles in classroom interaction.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of education depends upon quality of teaching and learning process. (Marzano & Toth, 2013). For effective teaching learning process, teacher need content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and professional skills for holistic development of learner (Bradshaw et al. 2018). Students' intrinsic motivation, engagement, and active participation play key role in quality education. Therefore, these aspects can be developed by ensuring good classroom interaction inside the classroom learning environment (Lyster, 2015). Classroom interaction provides opportunity to the students to transmit their knowledge, demonstrate capacities, and enhance academic achievement (Taous, 2012). CI is a way of interaction among individuals, learning materials, and classroom environment (Lerang, Ertesvåg and Havik, 2019). The strategies for good classroom interaction are questioning, group work, cooperative learning, where students can be involved in task oriented activities (Jia 2013). Generally, classroom interaction is very broad term but considering major domains of CI, Pianta and Hamre (2010) developed a theoretical framework to assess classroom interaction in a systematic way.

Generally, researchers aligned the success of students with teachers teaching competencies, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and way of interaction (Lucenario, Yangco, Punzalan and Espinosa, 2016). Risan (2020) argued that professionally teachers possess pedagogical knowledge which enable them to internalize theoretical knowledge into practice. In twenty first century the concept of education has changed from memorizing information to the creation or innovation of something new. This demand can be achieved by incorporating pedagogical knowledge, students-based classroom setting, teaching resources and environment as per students' need and interest (Care, Kim, Vista & Anderson, 2018). For pedagogical design, teacher needs pedagogical knowledge and skills, which enable teachers to structure and organize classroom in an effective way (Banerjee, 2016). Researchers concluded that to ensure quality education well qualified teachers, organized setting and innovative techniques of student involvement are necessary (Ali, Sulaiman & Javed, 2018).

Conclusively, it seems that pedagogical knowledge is necessary for teachers to provide effective learning environment inside the classroom but, in 2018, KPK Government notified professional degree to be not mandatory to hire teachers to teach in government schools. Based on that decision many teachers without professional qualification have been recruited and serving in different schools in the study context. Moreover, CI which is an important aspect of teaching learning process is still unexplored in the study context. Therefore, considering these important points, this study intends to find the difference between classroom interaction of professionally qualified and unqualified teachers in the context of Chitral, KPK.

Methodology

The study relies on qualitative paradigm using comparative case study method which enabled the researcher to investigate the classroom interaction where data collection process was carried out in a natural setting. Creswell (2013) states that researcher choose qualitative research paradigm to empower individuals to share their stories and interpret their views in a natural setting. As Merriam (2009) has stated that knowledge is constructed through human interaction rather than it is an objective phenomenon. So, this study focused to make meaning from participants' point of view and to construct knowledge from the collected data (Creswell, 2013; Boeije, 2010). The reason of selecting the case study method was to provide an opportunity to the researcher to explore the real situation and to identify the differences between classroom interaction of professionally qualified and unqualified teachers.

Data Collection
Data collection was carried out using semi structured interview, classroom observation, field notes, and focused group interview of students (Meriam & Tisdell, 2016). Study was carried out in six Government Girls' Secondary Schools in District Lower Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The researcher selected Pakistan Studies teachers. Among them three were professionally qualified and three were professionally unqualified teachers.

Data Analysis
All interviews were transcribed and coded for individual ideas of both cases. Then the extracted codes were put into categories based on the linked ideas. Further, categories were grouped into main themes. Lastly, the emerged themes from both cases were compared by cross case analysis to get findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Moreover, data obtained through field notes and observation was also analyzed by reading and highlighting the important points while mentioning them in participants' response to confirm their congruency with the interviews and focus group discussion.

Findings
After analyzing the data through the process of color coding, the following key themes were identified around the three domains of CI.

Classroom Organization
Data indicated that participants of both cases have knowledge regarding classroom management and doing proper practices in the classroom. They have classroom rules displayed in classroom and doing regular lesson planning except one participant of case one. They are providing opportunity to students to participate in classroom discussion. On the other hand, Case Two (professionally unqualified teachers) had time management issue. Data depicted that they are mostly unable to start and end the concern class on time.

Therefore, Observation also depicted that participants of both cases provide variety of opportunities to students like, group work, questioning and answering, and group discussion. While doing classroom activities participants were monitoring the students work except one participant of case two who did not monitored while doing individual or group work.

Instructional Support

It is identified that participants of both cases preferred to use variety of instructional method. They are well aware that students are with different learning abilities. They used lecture method along with different instructional techniques to facilitate every individual. They did not utilize a single method of teaching. They said that students have different learning style therefore they cannot pick by using single method of teaching.

It is further identified that participants of both cases had a written lesson plan but participants of case two considered that developing lesson plan is a time consuming activity. They were unfamiliar with the property of lesson plan to guide a teacher to do all the important step of teaching and learning within the given time. It is further exemplified that the participants of case one focused upon formative assessment to do more and more interaction with student while the participants of case two were not doing consistently

Emotional Support

Although participants of both cases were in favor to keep friendly relation with students but it did not reflect in practices of professionally unqualified teachers. As discussed above one of the participants called dumb and deaf class. While one of the participants of case two had positive attitude while teaching in the classroom. She responds positively saying well, you can do, well-done, and practicing clapping hands for them etc.

In addition to that it is observed that professionally unqualified teachers were not well familiar with the emotional support from teachers. They considered only the positive comments are the indicator of positive relationship. In differing to those professionally qualified teachers have awareness regarding to provide ways to the students where they get emotional support and face issues. While discussing issues related misbehavior of students in the classroom professionally unqualified teachers considered misbehavior as their family matter. They said that some students come from families where they do not teach good manners therefore, they misbehave in the classroom. But professionally qualified teachers elaborated that the reasons for misbehaviors may be lack of interest, personal or family problems, and health issue. They also narrated those reasons of misbehaviors may be lack of smart teaching and classroom management skills of the teachers. Professionally unqualified teachers while responding to the point about ways of addressing such issues stated that if students misbehave in the class, we warn them. If they repeat the same behavior, we can call their parents.

Furthermore, data also illustrated that professionally unqualified teachers considered that students should be punished. As discussed above one participant said we cannot ignore the effect of punishment. There should be strictness from teachers otherwise students. Therefore,

professionally unqualified teachers preferred to be strict to solve such type of problems in the classroom.

Discussion

Data gathered around classroom organization revealed that the participants of both cases inculcates different classroom management techniques like proper classroom rules and routines, to maintain classroom discipline and followed a well written lesson plan to maintain classroom discipline. Here, participants of case two mostly faced time management issue. Malik and Rizvi (2018) concluded that proper time management contributes to run classroom activities smoothly. The time management issue may be linked with lack of systematic work according to proper lesson plan. Lesson planning and time management have positive relationship with each other. If a teacher follows proper lesson plan then they can be able to utilize time in a productive way and promote conducive learning environment (Khan, Farooqi, Khalil & Faisal, 2016)

Moreover, study further revealed that participants of both cases provide different instructional support to the students to promote good CI. They preferred to use a variety of teaching techniques like discussion, questioning, individual work, and group work. As, Wilson (2017) argued that formative assessment works as an important tool to enhance interaction inside the classroom where teacher can provide consistent opportunity to the students to be part of learning process. Also, formative assessment is productive regarding high scores and academic progress of the students (Chen, Jiao & Hu, 2021). Therefore, participants of case one focused upon formative assessment and doing it consistently while, in case two it was very rare in practice. Data around the domain of emotional support revealed that participants of case one showed positive respond towards the provision of positive relationship with student and which also reflects in their classroom teaching. Additionally, they preferred to recognize and manage negative emotions of students which are hindrance in teaching learning process. Recognition of negative emotions of students and anger management are the important strategies to provide the support the student to come out of the emotional hindrance and it will provide confidence to the student (Ojala, 2015). While the participants of case two also respond positively but again they were unaware regarding critical dimensions of teacher-student relationship. Positive relationship (caring, support, trust and respect) and emotionally sound environment from teacher enhance students' self-confidence, fosters students' self-trust and increases students' participation as well as motivation to learn (Ronen & Kerret, 2020; Shah, 2018; McCarthy, 2012).

In addition, there is another interesting finding that some participant of case two showed same findings in some domain as case one reflected. Therefore, this similarity would be the reason of academic and previous professional experience of case two from different prestigious institutions where they might be availed learning environment.

Conclusion

It is concluded that participants of both cases have similar practices under the domain of classroom organization and instructional support except time management where the practices of

professionally unqualified teachers were not up to the set requirements. Furthermore, in the domain of emotional support there is a difference between the practices of professionally qualified and unqualified teachers where professionally unqualified teachers have limited understanding regarding the provision of emotional support. They are less familiar with the dimensions and indicators of emotional support.

Recommendations

For Educational Department
There is a need of need-based training for professionally unqualified teachers where at least the basic and the key domains of educational setting should be included within a proper time frame.

- Refreshing training should also be provided for professionally qualified teachers to enhance their professional skills aligned with latest educational needs and objectives.

For Future Researcher
A detail study to explore views of students about the problem can be a value addition in these findings.

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