Journal of Contemporary Teacher Education
Vol.III, 2019, 31-41

Dimension Wise Difference in Planning Instructional Strategies at Secondary Level in Pakistan

Sidra Rizwan*

Abstract

The article focuses on planning instructional strategies (PIS) with its three dimensions namely understanding, dispositions and practices as reported in the "National professional standards for teachers in Pakistan" (NPSTP). The research determined the difference in the three dimensions of the defined standard among in-service secondary school teachers with respect to gender and location. It was a survey type quantitative study. The population included all the secondary school teachers (SSTs) in the four provinces and Islamabad. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling which comprised of 400 teachers teaching secondary classes. To calculate the difference of means independent sample t-test was applied between the understanding dimension of male & female teachers which showed no significant difference, whereas significant difference was observed between the dispositions and practices of male & female teachers. Location wise no significant difference was found between the understanding and practices of urban & rural teachers related to PIS, while significant difference was established in the dispositions of rural & urban teachers towards PIS. On the basis of the findings it was recommended that strata wise all the SSTs required in-service professional development in all the three dimensions of PIS at varying degrees.

Keywords: Professional standards, Instructional Planning, Understanding, Dispositions, Practices

* Lecturer, STED, Faculty of Education, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
Email: sidra.rizwan@aiou.edu.pk

Introduction

The concept of teaching has changed from transfer of knowledge to transformation and understanding of knowledge in a well organized systematic way, for this the planning and delivery mechanism of teaching is imperative. Planning covers all the aspects of delivery i.e. what, how, when, where and whom to deliver. This requires teaching that is based on multiple strategies for understanding of knowledge. This gave birth to the standard of "Instructional planning and strategies" which has been included in the professional standards in the country.

The current teacher education programs in Pakistan are under constant criticism and teachers are mainly held responsible for this deterioration. To rectify the situation, the government of Pakistan has put an effort in teacher education programs in the form of professional standards which are implemented throughout the country. The execution of these standards will enable the adoption of new methodologies and techniques in the real classroom which will enhance the pedagogical skills of prospective as well as in-service teachers in the country.

National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (NPSTP)

The National Education Policy (2010) recognized teachers' role in these words, "the teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all educational reforms at the grassroots level."

PST provide premise for consistent and standardized teacher education which comprises of knowledge, values, understandings and skills for effective teaching. They provide for the up gradation of teachers' professional status and position in the society and also typical reference point for interaction within the profession.

In 2009 PST were introduced in Pakistan with the consent of all the four provinces and federal capital. These standards identify the domains of specific expectations from the teachers regarding content knowledge, dispositions or attitudes/beliefs and skills related to instructional planning & strategies which are binding for the teachers and provide a framework for the improvement of programs of education of pre- service and in-service teachers (NPSTP, 2009).

Planning Instructional Strategies (PIS)

Eggen & Kauchak (2001) reported that teachers' understanding comprises of content knowledge, pedagogy of content and general pedagogy. It is rightly stated that you can only teach what you understand. Teaching as a multifaceted activity requires detailed preparation and planning. Effective teachers aim highly for the students

and apply a variety of strategies for enhancing students' outcomes. Well planned and prepared instructions result in effective teaching learning process.

According to Jackson & Davis (2000), professional standards show the students' learning outcomes but teacher is the sole decision maker as to what shall be taught in the class and how this teaching may take place as s/he is responsible for the achievement of the desired learning outcomes in students.

Planning is an organized process that prepares teachers to teach effectively before they face the actual class room (Wharton-McDonald, Pressley & Hampston, 1998). Different aspects as time allocation and preparation of suitable resources prior to classroom teaching are of great significance. Stronge (2007) reported that effective teachers develop instructional plans and follow them by revising continuously according to the changing needs of diverse classrooms with a focus of providing opportunities of meaningful learning for all the students. An instructional plan that considers students' diverse learning styles, previous knowledge and skills can result in effective teaching.

Difference in Teaching

i) Gender

In 2004 Kardia & Wright stated "Teaching requires skill, insight, intelligence, diligence, and faculty struggle to succeed in a variety of ways in meeting the challenges of the classroom." Teachers hold a vital position in the teaching and learning process of any education system. A visionary educator with distinctive comprehension of the way toward transforming hypothesis into training is in a superior position to gadget and actualize reasonable useful methodologies in his/her working circumstance. The obligation of organizing understudies' states of mind and practices in the general public lies with the instructors (Aggarwal, 2010).

Despite the fact that both male and female teacher demonstrate similar characteristics their methods for addressing the showing difficulties might be extraordinary. It is pivotal to comprehend why and how male and female teachers instruct in various courses keeping in mind the end goal to help instructors in their endeavors towards enhancing their instructing.

Starbuck in 2003 studied difference in teaching styles according to gender by controlling the disciplinary variables. In 2004 Kuh, Laird & Umbach acknowledged, "Besides controlling for disciplinary and other differences women are more likely than their counterparts to value and

use effective educational practices."

The National Survey of Student Engagement (2005) suggested means in which male and female vary in their teaching. The female teachers stress upon higher order skills, dynamic and mutual learning; and variety of experiences more as compared to male teachers.

ii) Location

Location is another feature which is a source of variation among the teachers at different levels around the world. Teachers of urban and rural areas have disparities between the facilities provided to them and available opportunities. There are researches which provided the facts that teachers teaching in urban areas have more opportunities and facilities of development than the teachers working in the rural areas.

Beesley, Atwill, Blair, & Barley (2010) reported that teaching posts remain vacant in the rural areas as teachers prefer to work in the urban areas due to facilities and opportunities of career development. There is shortage of teachers, especially for the science subjects which may cause the deficiency of teachers and increase the work load on the available faculty teachers. This may affect the learning outcomes of the students.

According to Erickson, Noonan, & McCall (2012) the teachers working in the rural schools have lack of facilities and opportunities for the development of their teaching career as compared to the options available to their urban fellow teachers. This aspect shows that the teachers working in the rural school struggle more and face difficulties in coping with their successful career while on the other hand their fellow teachers working in the urban schools enjoy more options and opportunities to development of their teaching career.

Ali & Halai (2010) revealed that male school teachers were more inclined towards use of PST as compared to the female school teachers on the contrary teachers working in urban schools were more inclined towards the use of PST as compared to the teachers working in the rural areas.

In view of Shakir & Adeeb 2014, the male teachers at the secondary level were more competent as compared to their female counterparts while the performance of urban secondary school teachers was better than the rural teachers working in secondary schools.

Moreover, according to Nejati, Hassani, & Sahrapour (2014) no difference was seen according to gender in classroom management and teaching strategies whereas, male teachers showed good inclination in student engagement and teaching as compared to the female teachers.

Objectives

The objective of the study, in the light of NPST, was to determine the difference in planning instructional strategies of male & female, urban & rural teachers teaching secondary classes.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were verified:

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference in the understanding, dispositions and practices of PIS according to gender.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference location wise in the understanding, dispositions and practices related to PIS.

Methodology

It was a survey study conducted by using quantitative research approach. All the public sector in-service secondary school teachers of the four provinces and Islamabad were the population. Multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample of the study. Firstly from every province a single district was selected through convenient sampling. Secondly, a Tehsil (administrative unit) was selected randomly from each district, along with Islamabad. Thirdly, proportionate stratified sampling technique was applied to select 80 secondary level schools to serve the purpose of the study. At the fourth stage random sampling was used to select at least 5 SSTs from each selected secondary school; 5×80= 400.

The data for understanding dimension of PIS was collected through a self-reporting questionnaire; for dispositions dimension a Teacher Behaviors Inventory was developed and for practices dimension of PIS a rating scale were developed to gauge the levels of secondary school teachers in the three dimensions. The research tools for the study were developed on five point Likert scale.

1. Understanding dimension

A questionnaire comprising of 50 statements and a test of 20 MCQs was developed to collect data about the understanding of the content of PIS. The reliability was α= .92.

2. Dispositions dimension

A 42 items Teacher Behaviors inventory was designed to collect data from the SSTs about their dispositions towards PIS. The reliability of the tool was α= .82.

3. Practices dimension

A rating scale with 20 items was developed to appraise the practices of SSTs regarding engagement in activities of PIS. Its reliability was α= .97.

The response rate of all the three research tools was 86%.

Analyses

i) Gender wise

The difference between male and female SSTs in the three dimensions of PIS was calculated by applying the Independent sample t-test, which is given in table 1.

Table 1

Difference in the three dimensions of PIS of male (M) and female (F) SSTs

S/N	Dimensions	Gender	n	Mean	SD	Mdif.	t-value
1	Understanding	M	197	202.1	16.6	.5	.27 (p= .79)
		F	148	201.6	18.5		
2	Dispositions	M	197	169.9	17.6	-5.4	-3.00 (p= .00)
		F	148	175.5	16.8		
3	Practices	M	197	78.6	10.3	-2.3	-2.14 (p= .03)
		F	148	80.9	9.3		

Level of significance $p<0.05$

Table 1 reveals the understanding dimension where t-value= .27, p=.79, the difference between male and female SSTs is not significant at $p<0.05$. According to dispositions dimension t = -3.00, p = .00 the difference between male and female SSTs is significant at $p<0.05$. In the practices dimension the difference between male and female SSTs t = -2.14, p = .03 is significant at $p<0.05$. Thus $H_0 1$ is partially rejected.

ii) Location wise

The difference between urban and rural SSTs in the three dimensions of PIS was calculated by applying Independent sample t-test, which is shown in table 2.

Table 2
Dimension wise difference between urban (U) and rural (R) SSTs

S/N	Dimensions	Location	N	Mean	SD	Mdif.	t-value
1	Understanding	U	107	202.4	17.4	.8	.4 (p=.69)
		R	238	201.6	17.5		
2	Dispositions	U	107	176.0	15.5	5.4	2.7 (p=.01)
		R	238	170.6	18.0		
3	Practices	U	107	80.9	10.9	1.9	1.6 (p=.10)
		R	238	78.9	9.3		

Level of significance $p<0.05$

Table 2 illustrates the understanding dimension where t = .4, p =.69 at $p<0.05$ the difference between the urban and rural SSTs in this dimension is not significant. Whereas, in the dispositions dimension t = 2.7, p =.01 at $p<0.05$ the difference between the urban and rural SSTs is significant. Although, in practices dimension t = 1.6, p = .10 at $p<0.05$ the difference between urban and rural SSTs is not significant. Therefore, $H_0 2$ is partially rejected.

Findings

- There was no significant difference in the understanding dimension of male and female SSTs, whereas there was a significant difference between dispositions and practices dimensions of male and female SSTs.
- There was no significant difference between the understanding and practices dimensions of urban and rural SSTs, whereas there was a significant difference between the dispositions dimension of urban and rural SSTs.

Discussion

The research investigated strata wise difference in the three dimensions i.e. understanding, dispositions and practices related to planning instructional strategies by SSTs according to NPSTP. As these standards were introduced in 2009 they are still in implementation phase in the country. The present study provided a clear picture of where the in-service teachers currently stand and what is required of them to achieve the prescribed standard according to the professional standards.

The findings of the study identified that the female SSTs were comparatively better than the male SSTs as they valued and showed more commitment in their dispositions towards PIS, they were found more engaged in the activities related to PIS in their teaching. This could be because the female SSTs are generally known to have better dispositions towards teaching and the general perception is that they are more dedicated to the profession than their male counterparts. These findings supported the results of Ali & Halai (2010) which revealed that male school teachers were more inclined towards use of professional standards as compared to the female school teachers on the contrary teachers working in urban schools were more inclined towards the use of professional standards as compared to the teachers working in the rural areas.

The findings of Shakir & Adeeb, 2014 propagated that male teachers at secondary school level were more competent as compared to the female secondary school teachers while the urban school teachers were more skillful than the rural teachers. These were very similar to the findings of the present study which showed that urban teachers were better than the rural teachers in the area of PIS. Whereas, Nejati, et al (2014) reported that according to gender no difference was observed in classroom management and teaching strategies of male and female school teachers; on the other hand male teachers showed good inclination in student engagement and teaching as compared to the female teachers. These finding were contradictory as the female teachers were reported better than the male teachers in the present study.

It was observed that the urban secondary school teachers showed improved dispositions towards PIS than the rural secondary school teachers, they gave value to all the components of PIS and portrayed more committed teaching. Erickson, et al (2012) reported that the teachers working in urban areas have access to quality professional development as compared to the rural schools teachers who have to struggle for quality training initiatives.

Conclusion

The findings of the research concluded that the female teachers of secondary schools showed better dispositions and practices in PIS than the male SSTs. However, the teachers at secondary level regardless of their gender possessed practically the same levels of understanding of PIS.

The SSTs working in urban schools displayed better dispositions towards PIS than those teaching in rural schools, whereas their understanding and practices regarding PIS were almost the same.

Recommendations

- Both gender and location wise SSTs needed training at varying degree in all the three dimensions of PIS.
- Gender wise female SSTs required more in-service professional training in the understanding of content of PIS, whereas the male SSTs needed training in the dispositions towards PIS and practices of PIS.
- Location wise rural SSTs were in dire need of professional development in all the three dimensions of PIS more than their urban counterparts.

References

Amirali, M., Halai, A. (2010). Teachers' Knowledge about the nature of mathematics: A survey of secondary school teachers in Karachi, Pakistan. Bulletin of Education and Research, 32(2), 45-61

Aggarwal, J. (2010). *Principles, Methods and Techniques of Teaching* (2nd ed.). New Dehli: Vikas Publication House Pvt. Ltd.

Beesley, A. D., Atwill, K., Blair, P., & Barley, Z. A. (2010). Strategies for recruitment and retention of secondary teachers in central U.S. rural schools. The Rural Educator, 31(2), 1-9.

Erickson, A. S. G., Noonan, P. M., & McCall, Z. (2012). Effectiveness of online professional development for rural special educators. American Council on Rural Special Education, 31(1), 22-32.

Government of Pakistan. (2009). *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan* (NPST-2009).Islamabad: Ministry of Education.

Government of Pakistan. (1998). *National education policy* 1998-2010. Islamabad: Ministry of Education. Government of Pakistan.

Jackson, A., & Davis, G. (2000). Training points 2000: *Educating adolescents in the 21st century*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kardia, D.B., & Wright, M.C. (2004). Instructor Identity: The Impact of Gender and Race on Faculty Experiences with Teaching.

Kuh, G. D., Nelson Laird T. F., & Umbach, P. D. (2004). Aligning faculty and student behavior: Realizing the promise of Greater Expectations. Liberal Education, 90(4), 24-31.

National Education Policy. (2009).Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

National Survey of Student Engagement (2005). Exploring different dimensions of student engagement. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Nejati, R., Hassani, T.M. &Sahrapour, H.J. (2014). The Relationships between Gender and Student Engagement, Instructional Strategies, and Classroom Management of Iranian EFL Teachers. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 4 (6), 1219-1226

Policy and Planning Wing. (2009). *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan.* Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

Shakir, M., & Adeeb, M. A. (2014). Performance Appraisal: An Evaluation of Teachers' Competencies Based on National Professional Standards in Pakistan. *International Review of Social Sciences*, 2 (12)

Starbuck, G.H. (2003). College teaching styles by gender. Paper presented at the Western Social Science Association Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, April 9-12.

Stronge, J. H. (2007). *Qualities of Effective Teachers.* Alexandria: ASCD .

Wharton-McDonald, R., Pressley, M., & Hampston, J. (1998). Literacy Instruction in Nine First-Grade Classrooms: Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement. *Elementary School Journal*, *99*, 103-119.