Students' Feedback: A Stimulus Reflective Practice for Professional Development of the Prospective Teachers

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Reflective practices have led teachers to shift their attention towards student's feedback where learning is viewed as an active process. Teachers reflect upon their students' feedback and attempt to develop good relations with students. This paper examines the relationship between student's feedback and professional development of student teachers during practicum. Data was collected from 800 perceptive teachers through questionnaire and observation. Descriptive analysis was made to see the tendencies and then variables were computed to test the hypotheses. Linear regression model was applied to see the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The research hypothesis was accepted, that a significant relationship exists between student's feedback and relationship with students. Moreover, this paper suggested that introducing a comprehensive student's feedback can improve the professional skills of student teachers. There is a need to highlight the importance of student's feedback to the prospective teachers during teaching practicum rather than theoretical perspectives.

Key words: *students' feedback, reflective practices, professional development, prospective teacher*

Introduction

Student teachers are key agent to change the destiny of a nation. During practical lives, they will get a chance to convert the raw youth talent of a nation into a productive asset and play their role to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of students. That is why vitality of professional development of prospective teachers has been acknowledged and various modes for the development of student teachers are in vogue. Reflective mode of professional development indicateds that merely participation of prospective teachers in academic programs is not enough; rather they need to critically think and explore their classroom practices through peers, colleagues & students' feedback. They should be wise enough to profit from their students' feedback to identify and rectify their professional mistakes. Albert Einstein once said "Always learn from yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow. The important thing is never stop to questioning yourself". The early recognition of reflective practices was documented in the Socratic Method and Platonic Spiritual theory. Both methods are based on the analogy of self-questioning and dialogue (Brockbank & McGill, 2007).

Objectives of the study

Objectives of the study include:

1. To investigate the practices of student teachers to take students' feedback during practicum.

2. To find out the significance of students' feedback to develop good relations with peers during practicum.

Literature Review

Various definitions of reflective practices have portrayed that it is conscious thinking to trace the gaps of professional practices. It is a process of thinking to understand the classroom practices which teachers have already faced. The familiar situation works as a precedent to deal with

unexpected situations. Merely understanding of a practice is not a reflective practice rather it is conscious effort to search out new ways to strengthen the practice in the light of previous experiences (Schon 1983). Reflective practice refers to paying critical attention of teachers towards professional values to find out the theories working behind their day to day actions (Bolton, 2010). It is way of studying own practices to improve teaching skills (Brightside, 2012). Peterson, 2000; Ghaye, 2011; Burniske & Meibaum, 2012 student's feedback in the list of reflective practices. Student's feedback liberates teachers to make greater efforts to change the deficits into strengths to improve their teaching practices. Junior grade students cannot discriminate between effective and ineffective teaching behaviours of their teachers. Senior grade students' feedback can be used as an instrument to evaluate teacher's performance. Students' feedback is an important reflective practice but it is difficult to measure the reliability and validity of the feedback (Peterson, 2000; Ghaye, 2011: Burniske & Meibaum, 2012). Senior grade students demonstrate respect to their teachers and hesitate to pass any type of comments on their teacher's work. Various types of feedback forms can be distributed to peep in to the minds of the learners. Student teachers may reframe and change their practices in light of comments passed by majority of their students.

Reflective Practices Discourse

Since 1987 Role of reflective practices have been widely acknowledged in the professional development of doctors, engineers, nurses, teachers and many more professionals. Similarly, critical thinking and reflective practice is a vital component of various teacher training programs (Pollard, 2005). During 2006, Higher Education Commission (HEC) revised the curriculum of teacher training program i.e. B.Ed, M.Ed and included 3-4 units on reflective practices and critical thinking (GOP, 2006). Schon, (1983) the originator of the term reflective practices has defined the concept as: "Reflective Practice is thoughtful consideration of own experience in applying knowledge to practice". Since the notion of reflective practices is spreading and being utilized for professional development of professionals many philosophers have attempted to define the concept. For instance, according to Ghaye (2011), it is an acquisition of new insight of self professional practices through experience. It is

a way to make a sense about professional issues, providing courage to work competently and ethically at the edge of order and chaos" (Ghaye, 2000, Ghaye, 2011). Reflective practice refers to the active examination of one's own professional experiences to make opportunities for professional development. In teacher education context many reflective practice are evoked e.g., writing reflective diaries, reflective learning journals, reflective stories, reflective through peer observation, reflection through colleagues feedback, reflection through students feedback and through professional portfolios (Farrell, 2004; Marshall, 2008; Fathi & Behzadpour, 2011; Hative & Goodyear, 2002; Derya, 2008 & Tice, 2011). Larrivee, 2010 defined reflective practice as reflection of teachers to actively participate in a perpetual growing process requiring on-going critical reflection over their classroom practices (Larrivee, 2010).

Many have described that reflective practice is a conscious thinking of teachers to trace the uncertainties of professional practices. It is a process to think and understand about classroom practices in the light of students' and colleagues' feedback. Simply understanding of a professional practice cannot be considered as reflective practice rather it is an attempt to strengthen the practice in the light of feedback and previous experiences (Schon, 1983). The critical attention of professionals towards own values and to find out the theories working behind professional practices is called reflective practice" (Bolton, 2010). Many definitions uncovered that reflective practice is a thoughtful consideration and critical evaluation of a professional practice from as many aspects as possible. The reflective practice is a critical stance to solve professional problems within the context of theory to search out the disparities and similarities between the actual practice and existing practice in light of a theory" (Moon, 2003). Creativity is also an important dimension in reflective practice, so it is an ability to re-examine the experience in order to search out new ways to respond to a situation is called reflective practice (Russell, 1999). Nothing can be done effectively without information that is why, it is a systematic and comprehensive data-gathering process augmented by dialogues and collaborations, to understand and analyze own teaching practices (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004).

Students' feedback Benefits and limitations

Study by Burniske, & Meibaum, (2012) indicate the benefits and limitations of students' feedback: Students are the direct recipients of instructions and extensively contact with their teachers on daily basis. Various demographics variables e.g., socioeconomic status, age writing competencies directly affect students to furnish their feedback. Results of students' feedback may be misinterpreted or misused and cannot be used as a single reliable instrument for rating teachers' performance. The correlation between students' results and rating remained widely inconsistent, but proper usage of students' feedback may enable teacher to improve their teaching and learning environment (Burniske, & Meibaum, 2012). Students from same class may rate one teacher as good, average, effective or excellent. On the other hand students of another class will grade the same teacher as an ideal teacher (Ferguson, 2010). Generally, students do not have knowledge about teaching strategies, standards, classroom management techniques, curriculum, and do not understand responsibilities of their teachers. Elementary level students cannot discriminate between effective and ineffective methods of teaching (Worrell & Kuterbach, 2001; Goe et al., 2008). The earliest age by which learners can responsibilities of their teachers. Elementary level students cannot discriminate between effective and ineffective methods of teaching (Worrell & Kuterbach, 2001; Goe et al., 2008). The earliest age by which learners can effectively rate their teachers is not still defined. Moreover, while furnishing written feedback students may copy other comments. The study revealed that university teachers made their self-evaluation after receiving the feedback from their students. University teachers attempt to understand the problems of their students and attempt to have good relations with their students (Hajira & Shamsa, 2012). Teachers may invite verbal or written feedback from their students on a particular aspect of their teaching.

Hypothesis

This study was guided by following hypothesis

H_1: Students' feedback is a significant reflective practice of student teachers to develop good relations with students during practicum.

H_0: Students' feedback is not a significant reflective practice of student teachers to develop good relations with students during practicum.

Figure 1: Donald Schon Concept of Reflective Practice (Schon, 1983)

Methodology

This study applied mixed method approach and based on the idea of compatibility between qualitative and quantitative method to be used in a single study and followed Convergent Parallel Design. This approach allows researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively and make separate analysis of both types of data. The major strength of this design is that it combines the advantages of each type of data. Quantitative data

provides generalizability, while qualitative data offers information about the context or settings (Cresswell, 2011). Population of the study comprised of male and female student teachers enrolled in B.Ed program during 2013-2014 at teacher training colleges and universities department of education of federal capital territory and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Universal sampling technique was applied to select the sample of the study from student teachers. Quantitative data was collected through a self-structured questionnaire having questions in the form of three point Likert scale. Researcher personally distributed and collected the questionnaire. The actual number of respondents was 910, however 800 student teachers returned the questionnaire and response rate was 87.91%. Qualitative data was collected through personal observation by using self -structured observation sheet. Ten percent of the total respondents were observed during the practicum observation

Results

Table 1

Descriptive analysis of students' feedback and relationship with students

Sr.	Statement	Disagree	%	UC	%	Agree	%	X	SD
1	I allow my students to provide feedback	248	31	57	7.1	495	61.9	3.41	1.27
2	I attempt to overcome my professional shortcomings in the light of feedback of my students	230	28.8	57	7.1	513	64.1	3.46	1.27
3	I understand para language of my students	188	23.4	54	6.8	558	69.8	3.67	1.31
4	When I feel that text book activities are difficult I design learning activities in light of students' feedback	201	25.1	63	7.9	536	67	3.59	1.22
5	I deviate from lesson plan in the light of students' feedback	166	20.7	84	10.5	550	68.8	3.66	1.16
6	I do plan future teaching activities in light of my students' feedback	262	32.8	63	7.9	475	59.3	3.39	1.33
7	I take feedback to establish good relations with my students	226	28.2	48	6.0	526	65.7	3.51	1.32

Table 2

Inter Item correlations between feedback and relationship with students

Variables	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
Q1 Allowing students to provide feedback	1.000	.178**	.178**	.283**	.362**	.315**	.293**
Q2Overcoming professional mistakes in Light of Students Feedback		1.000	.179**	.293**	.352**	.350**	.313**
Q23 Understanding para-language of students			1.000	.341**	.372**	.289**	.289**
Q4 Planning new activities in light of students feedback				1.000	.472**	.410**	.393**
Q5 Deviation from lesson in light of students feedback					1.000	.453**	.374**
Q6 Planning teaching activities for future in light of students feedback						1.000	.463**
Q7 Taking feedback to establish good relations with students							1.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 2 shows a moderate positive correlation between the response variables at 0.001 levels. Allowing students to provide feedback (r=.29, p<.01) understanding Para language of class (r=.30, p<.01), planning new teaching activities in light of students feedback (r=.39, p<.01 deviation from lesson in light of students feedback: (r =.34, p< .01), planning future teaching activities (r=.40, p<.01), taking feedback to establish good relations with students (r=.46, p<.01) shows that students feedback and relationship of prospective teachers were correlated.

Table 3

Model summary SF and Relation with students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R^2		SEE	DW
1	.579a	.336	.335		.92440	1.528

a. Predictors: (Constant), Students feedback

b. Dependent Variable: Relationship with students

Table-3 shows the model summary of student's feedback and relationship with students. The value of R^2=.336 indicates that nearly 34% of the total variability in the response variable (Relationship with Students) is accounted by the predictor variable (SF). This indicated a weak positive linear relationship between SF and relationship with students. The model shows that allowing students to provide feedback, understanding Para language of students, deviation from lesson plan if students did not grasp the contents and planning teaching future activities in the light of students' feedback significantly contributed toward establishment of good relations with students. The DW value=1.52 > 1.20 shows that no auto correlation existed in the data

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Table 4

ANOVA summary student's feedback and relationship with students

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	344.603	1	344.603	403.278	.000a
Residual	681.897	798	.855		
Total	1026.500	799			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Feedback

b. Dependent Variable: Relationship

Table-4 shows that F value=403.28 > 3.85 was highly significant which shows that the independent variables (students' feedback) included in the model affected the dependent variable (relationship with students). Therefore H1 was accepted that taking student's feedback during practicum was a significant to develop good relationship with students.

Table 5

Summary of Coefficients SF and PD

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
		Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**			**Correlations**		
1	(Constant)	.764	.138		5.552	.000			
	SF	.749	.037	.579	20.082	.000	.579	.579	.579

a. Dependent Variable: Feedback

Table 5 shows the summary of coefficients of Independent variable (Student's Feedback) and dependent variable (Relationship with Students). The coefficients of β =.749 has a t value of 20.08 (> 1.64) which shows that it was significant at the 0.05 level (as also shown by the p-value of 0.000). These values showed goodness of fit of independent variable with dependent variable. Therefore, it was concluded that taking student's feedback positively contributed to establish good relations with students during teaching practice.

Table 6

Observable indicators of Students' Feedback

Sr.	Themes	Sub-Theme	Indicators observed	% age
1	Students Feedback	Students suggestions/comments	20 PTs (25%) invited students' suggestions, comments during the lesson or at the end of class. Used the sentence that students can express their opinion.	24% (N=20)
		Overcoming weaknesses in light of students' feedback	6 PTs (8%) discussed about the comments previously passed by their students. (I remember your feedback). Used sentence that next time he/she would adopt another method or talked to bring improvement in future. Similarly 06 prospective teachers noticed every time when students were talking to each other during lesson.	8% (N=6)
		Feedback through Para-language of students	Whenever students attempted to pass notes, use mobile phone 23 PTs (29%) noticed such activities of their students. When few students were not looking at teachers face, PTs invited their attention. When students attempted to ask a class mate about some concept. Teacher went to students' desk and attempt to help the students. Teacher used words that he/she know you do not	29% (N=2)

understand. Teacher frequently asked whether they understood. Used sentence that I feel you do not understand.

Planning future teaching in light of students feedback	25 PTs (31%) frequently asked to the students; Do you understand? Do you face any difficulty to understand? Whenever, students attempted to ask something about class mates, teacher went to the students and attempted to clarify students' concepts. Teacher noticed that students were not taking notes. Teacher stopped and gave explanations. Teacher promised in the class that next time, he/she would do something in different way. Teacher was keen to take more and more feedback and quoted about previous feedback of the students.	31% (N=25)
Remembering students names	6% PTs (06), repeatedly asked names of their students during lesson. Used sentence (please tell me your name) and used sentence (I wouldn't know your name) or I forget your name.	8% (N=6) n=80

Table-6 shows that 24% prospective teachers invited students' feedback (through verbal suggestions/comments) while 29% were taking students feedback through the para-language of their students during practicum, 8% attempted to over their professional mistakes in light of their student's feedback. Nearly 31% showed behaviour that they while planning teaching activities they took into account their student's feedback. While 8% repeatedly asked about the names of their students during class, in other words they did not know the names of their students.

1. Simple majority of prospective teachers (61.9%) agreed that they invited feedback from their students during teaching practicum to improve their teaching skills.
2. About 64.1% of the prospective teachers are agreed that they gave importance to their students' feedback and attempt to overcome the gaps of their teaching practice in light of their students' feedback.
3. Majority of the respondents (69.8%) agreed and strongly agreed that they understood the facial expressions of their students during teaching process.
4. Nearly 67% of the prospective teachers are agreed that when they felt that text book activities are difficult to their students.

Whereas, 25.1% prospective teachers disagreed that they did not consider students' feedback to design learning activities when their students said that text book activities are difficult.

5. A reasonable majority of the prospective teachers (68.8%) agreed that they deviated from lesson plan in light of students' feedback, while 27.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with statement that they deviate from already planned lesson plan in the light of student feedback.
6. A simple majority of the prospective teachers (59.3%) are agreed that they considered students' feedback to plan future teaching activities, while 32.8% disagreed that they take students feedback to plan teaching activities during practicum.
7. About 65.7% of the prospective teachers are agreed that taking students' feedback is helpful to establish good relations with students, while 28.8% PTs disagreed that taking students' feedback during teaching is useful to establish good relations with students.
8. Student's feedback is a valuable reflective practice and transformative tool for professional development of prospective

teachers during practicum. The prospective teachers are agreed that they invited feedback from their students and they gave importance to student's feedback and attempt to overcome professional mistakes.

9. Similarly, majority of the Prospective Teachers agreed that they understand the Para language of students through their facial expressions during practicum. Moreover, prospective teachers agreed that they planned learning activities in the light of their student's feedback. Likewise many of them were agreed that they deviated from already planned lesson plan in light of student's feedback. 65.7% respondents agreed that taking student's feedback was helpful to develop good relations with their students.

10. Regression model summary indicates that nearly 34% of the total variability in the response variable (Relationship with Students) is accounted by the predictor variable (Students' Feedback). This indicated a weak positive linear relationship between Students' Feedback and relationship with students. The model shows that allowing students to provide feedback, understanding Para language of students, and deviation from lesson plan if students did not grasp the contents. Planning teaching activities in the light of students' feedback significantly contributed toward establishment of good relations with students.

Discussions and Conclusion

Students' feedback is a valuable source for teachers to improve the practicum and allows prospective teachers to directly evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. Students' feedback form may contain quantitative or qualitative or mix responses. It provides a multitude gauge to teachers to measure the effectiveness of their teaching. This study portrays students' feedback as an important source of reflection for student teachers. Teachers should take initiatives to develop good relations with their students especially during teaching practicum context. Head teachers and cooperating school teachers may guide student teachers that how

they can initiate reflections on students feedback. Inviting student's feedback on lesson plans, delivery of lesson and classroom management can facilitate student teachers to take the responsibility of their own professional development. The pre-service teachers regarded self-awareness as fundamental quality which may be developed through the reflective practicum course. Teachers emphasized that they developed awareness towards their own actions through videotaping of lessons, microteaching assignments, reflective journals, students feedback and through peer feedback (Erginel, 2006). It is pointed out by student teachers that they can identify and rectify their mistakes through student's feedback. Sometime reflective teachers can learn in a very ambiguous context. They remained keenly aware of their surrounding contexts and remained opened to seek feedback (Bright, 1996). Similarly, feedback from students enables student teachers to incorporate students' feedback in to their practices. Teachers can ask their students what they are thinking about what goes on in the classroom. Opinions and perceptions of students can add a different and valuable perspective in teaching. Teachers may examine their beliefs structure regarding education and engagement of their students in an ongoing process of diagnosis, with self and with learners, including observation, questioning, obtaining evaluative feedback, and critical reflections. This process of cultivating self-awareness and understanding about classroom policies is particularly valuable for those teachers seeking to defuse or avoid volatile or merely disruptive situations (Spiller, 2011). The correlation between students' results and rating remained widely inconsistent. Proper usage of students' feedback may enable teacher to improve their teaching and learning environment (Burniske, & Meibaum, 2012). It is common practice that university teachers made their self-evaluation after receiving feedback from their students. University teachers attempt to understand the problems of their students and make effort to have good relations with their students. So, congenial environment and friendly relation of prospective teachers can enhance students trust and ultimately they may receive a healthy feedback for progress.

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