

Teaching Practice Programme Contributing to Competent, Committed, Accountable and Ethical Teachers

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Abstract:

This paper has been developed as a conceptual analysis. It intends to initiate a democratic environment in the teaching practice programme of a Teacher Education Curriculum where the trainee teachers can develop their views without any conflict with the views of the supervisor (Teacher Educator). It has been proposed that this is possible through adopting the approach of counselling and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). The work has got its motivation from the work of Sosibo (2013) where the trainee teachers were instructed to self-evaluate. In that paper, it was reported that gradually the trainee teachers started understanding the evaluation procedure. In the present paper, it has been proposed that the trainee teachers and the teacher educator collaborate to arrive at a consensus about the best strategy for teaching in a particular situation. It has been finally argued that such an act of introducing the approach of CBT may lead to making the trainee teachers competent, committed, accountable and ethical as well.

Keywords: Teaching Practice; Counselling; Cognitive Behaviour Therapy; Competent, Committed, Accountable and Ethical Teacher

1. Introduction:

It is rather easier to recall who the good teachers in anyone's life were. However, it is difficult to categorically identify the characteristics that made them good teachers. But this is important when one comes out of the domain of "born teachers" and tries to focus on the huge number of people who come into the teaching profession to fulfill the social demand. Such a category of persons entering the teaching profession may not have innate abilities and liking for this profession. So that such teachers may become satisfied with their profession and become beneficial for the students and society at large, it becomes useful to identify some basic characteristics of a good teacher. Researchers and reviewers have focused on those (e.g Akram et al, 2015; Ghiatau, 2015; Shukla, 2014; Sosibo, 2013). In the national seminar organized by the RIE, Bhopal, India, four dimensions have been rightly identified. From that point of view, a teacher must be competent, committed, accountable and ethical. Along with this, it can be noted that these qualities of a teacher are best observable in actual teaching. In that way, the teaching practice programme becomes highly connected with the making of competent, committed, accountable and ethical teachers. This paper has been formulated as an extension of an interesting paper by Sosibo (2013) which has correctly raised the dissatisfaction of the trainee teachers about the observation procedure adopted by their supervisors (teacher educators) and addressed the resolution with the help of an introduction of a scheme of exercising self-accountability. The present paper has insisted that the apparent conflict between the trainee teachers and supervisors (teacher educators) is more deep-rooted and an approach that is followed by a counsellor using Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) could be a better answer.

2. Working definitions:

- *Teaching Practice Programme:* It is the most important part of the internship of a teacher education programme. Here the trainee teacher teaches students in a real situation following the pedagogical principle taught by the teacher educator who plays the role of the supervisor as well.
- *Counselling:* There are differences in opinion about the nature of counselling. In this paper, we accept the definition given by Gustard (1953) which has been highlighted by the NCERT(2008). It defines counselling as “learning-oriented, carried on in a one-to-one social environment. The counsellor who is competent and knowledgeable assists the client to learn, understand himself/herself and perceive realistically defined goals. At the end, the client becomes happier, healthy and a productive person in the society.”
- *CBT (Cognitive Behavior Therapy):* It is a psychological therapy that gives importance to the idea that ‘thoughts, feelings, and behaviour are so intimately related that changing one will change the others.’ (Butler and McManus, 2014)
- *Competent Teacher:* This means that the teacher is well conversant with the subject content, pedagogical skills and available technology and can efficiently integrate all these components for the maximum benefit of the students.
- *Committed Teacher:* Such a teacher is ready to exert her or his full for the purpose to which she or he is associated.
- *Accountable Teacher:* A teacher with this quality is very much transparent and goal-oriented. She or he or any other stakeholder can reflect upon the performance and is ready to make improvements upon the existing strategies.
- *Ethical Teacher:* An ethical teacher gives recognition of the basic values while dealing with students and society. According to Ghiatau (2015), at least seven values may be of

relevance. Those are care, freedom, autonomy, justice, respect, responsibility, and integrity.

3. Formulation of the research question:

As stated in the introduction, the seed for the present work lies with the report of Sosibo (2013) which corroborates fully with the personal observation of the author during her career of almost 25 years. Sosibo (2013) reported that the trainee teachers expressed discontent with the role of the supervisors. Some of the most prominent discontents are:

- Supervisors (teacher educators) differ in opinion regarding a single aspect of the teaching style of the trainee teacher who gets confused about whom to follow.
- The supervisors do not take into consideration the difference in resources and learning environments of different schools and the trainee teachers are evaluated on the same scale.
- The long and complex elaborations of teaching skills sometimes confuse the trainee teachers.

To address the situation, Sosibo requested some supervisors to prepare a consolidated and simplified list of teaching criteria that defined the target and gave the list to the trainee teachers as well so that they could evaluate their performance. By doing so, Sosibo argued, the trainee teachers accepted accountability and this gave scope for reflection as well.

The result, as obtained by Sosibo indicated that the correlation was low in the initial years of the Teacher Education programme. But, gradually the correlation became significant in the following years. Sosibo interpreted that, the trainee teachers gradually learned the intricacies of the evaluation system and that made the correlation better.

After having a generalized picture of the observations as reported by Sosibo and the experiences of the authors it becomes reasonable to assume that, there is a tendency of the trainee not to accept the directions given by the supervisors and to go by her or his way.

The questions that this paper wanted to address are:

- Why is it so that the trainee teachers do not accept the pedagogical principles as taught by the supervisors and want to go their way?
- In case some of the trainee teachers become teacher educators in her or his later life, the same phenomenon occurs with them as well. Why?
- How can one reduce this resistance in accepting the pedagogical principles?

4. Methodology:

This paper has been developed upon a *conceptual analysis* of the existing status of teaching practice programmes of the Teacher Education Curriculum.

5. Analysis:

The analysis starts with the use of a generalization of the model for achieving self-identity as proposed by Marcia (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966; Shrimali, 2008).

Starting from childhood to adulthood a person moves through different stages for achieving self-identity. The first stage has been termed the 'foreclosure' when the child accepts the views of the adults without question. Gradually, as the child grows, her or his views start forming which diffuse into her or his psychological world. Initially, the diffused views do not interfere with what comes from outside. But at some point, normally in adolescence, their views get strong enough to interfere

with the foreclosure and a state of unrest is created which is termed a moratorium. Finally, in adult life, a concrete view of self-identity is formed which may be called the stage of achievement. This is elaborated in Fig-1.

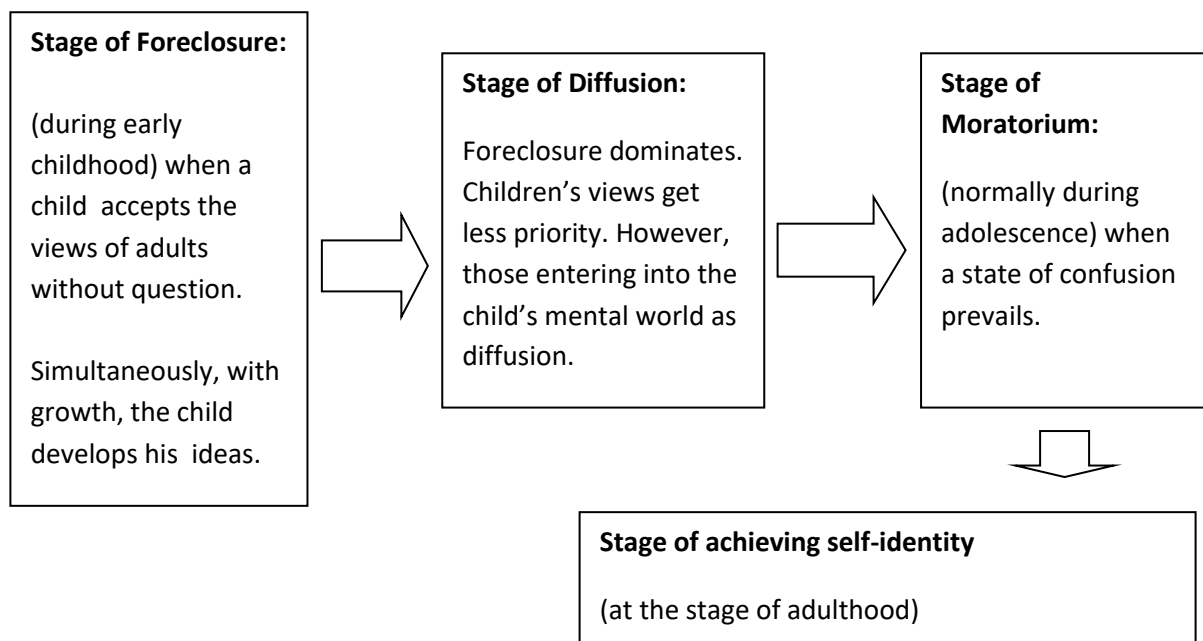


Fig-1: Stages of achieving self-identity

We can generalize the above picture in the following way.

For each person, there are two prominent types of knowledge.

- i) The first one is the **foreclosure type** which comes from other persons where the receiving person gives little resistance and accepts as it is.
- ii) The second is the **diffusive type** that is generated within the individual over time.

Normally in adolescence age, the urge for reconciliation is prominent concerning **the formation of self-identity**. This urge for reconciliation may be prominent in other areas also. For example, during teaching practice, the foreclosure type of knowledge comes from the TE and the diffusive type of knowledge comes from the TT. These two may contradict and generate the urge for reconciliation. Here the urge for reconciliation is concerning pedagogy and it comes at a higher age when a trainee teacher participates in teaching practice.

Based on the above generalization we develop our proposal which is stated as follows.

- This urge as stated above is the root of the discontent as stated by Sosibo.
- Our proposed extension of the work of Sosibo consists of three steps in the teaching practice programme. This extension has been made with the use of the basic approach of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT).
- This extension as proposed here gives scope for making the trainee teachers more competent, committed, accountable and ethical.

In the following the three steps have been described. Then it has been shown where the present proposal extends beyond the proposal of Sosibo. Finally, it has been argued, how this extension can make the trainee teachers more competent, committed, accountable and ethical.

The three steps:

Step-1: These days almost all the trainee teachers (TT) have smart phones. In the first turn, the trainee teacher teaches. One of her or his friends records portions of the introductory stage, teaching stage and evaluation stage. The TT observes the recorded teaching(R-1), reflects upon that and fills up a comment sheet (CS). The CS filled in by the trainee teacher is called CS-TT.

The same R-1 is examined by the teacher educator(TE) based upon which the Teacher educator fills in the same CS. This CS is termed CS-TE. Both of these CS-TT and CS-TE are now reviewed by both the TT and TE. This process is elaborated in Fig-2.

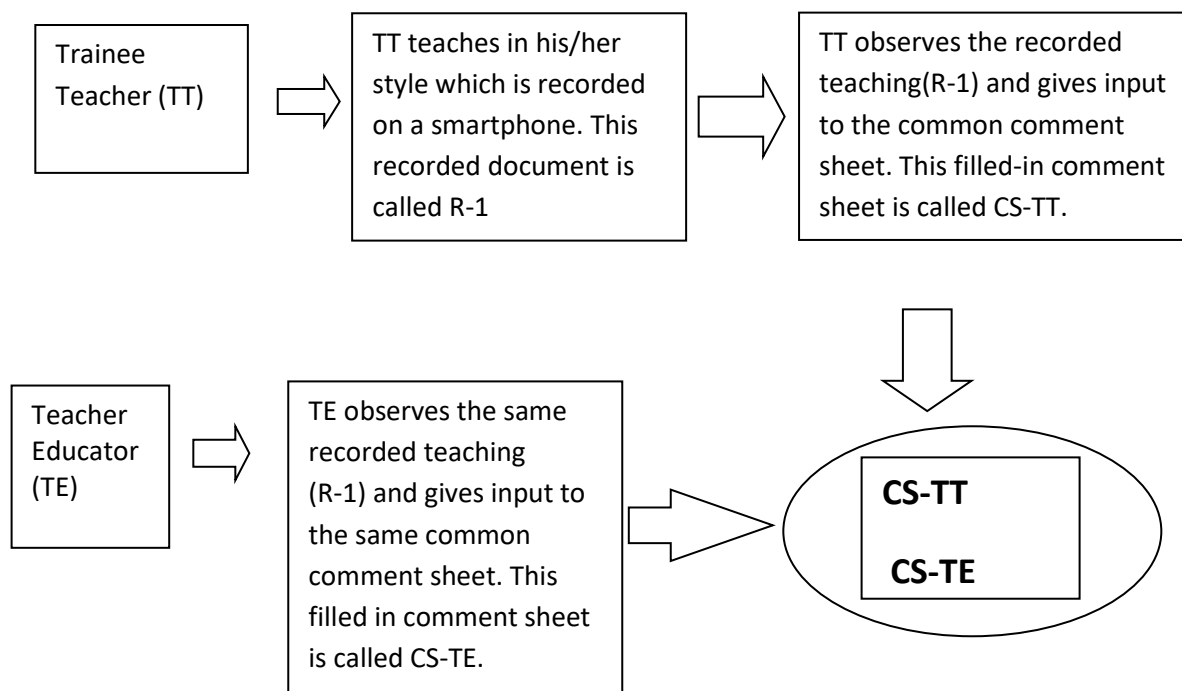


Fig-2: Step-1 towards the initiation of the approach of CBT in teaching practice

Step-2: The cognitive reflection on CS-TT based upon CS- TE changes the ‘own views’ of the TT. Similarly, the cognitive reflection on CS-TE based upon CS- TT may change the stand of TE.

A kind of collaboration occurs. This process is elaborated in Fig-3.

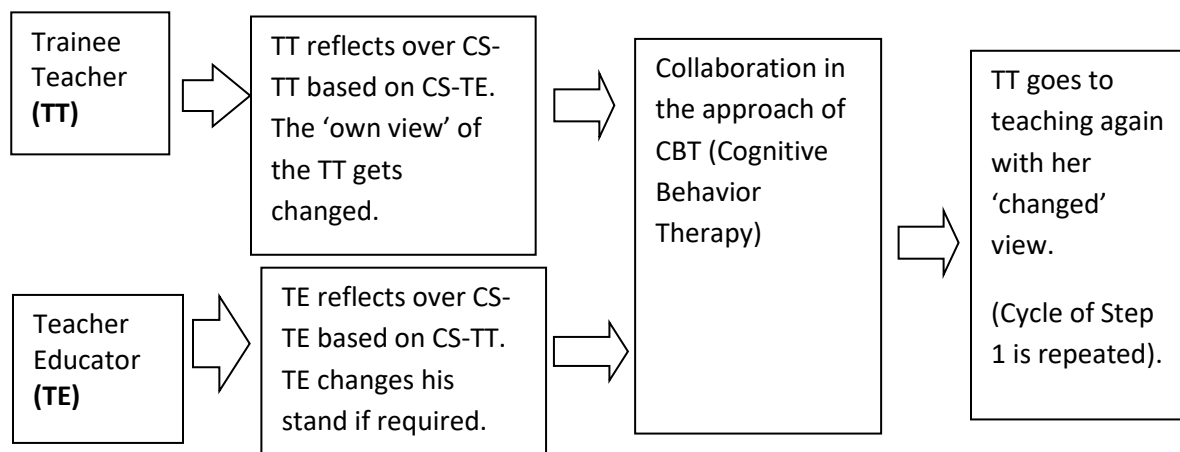


Fig-3: Step-2 towards the initiation of the approach of CBT in teaching practice

Step-3

Thus, here one can see that both the TT and the TE try to reach the point of view of the other through the steps stated above. They come to a consensus through this collaboration. This process is elaborated in Fig-4.

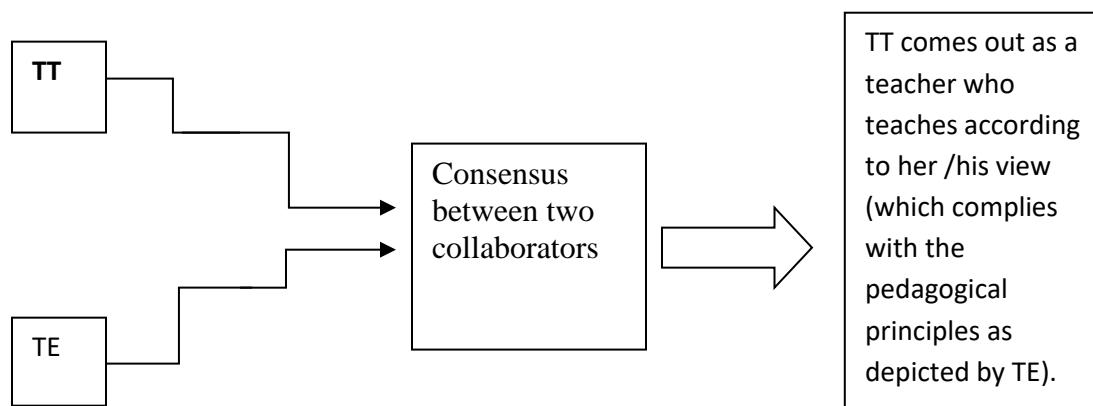


Fig-4: Step-3 towards the initiation of the approach of CBT in teaching practice

Comparison of the present proposal with the one experimented by Sosibo (2013):The above approach (Steps 1 to 3) proposed here in this paper is compared with the one presented by Sosibo (2013)as given below(Fig-5).

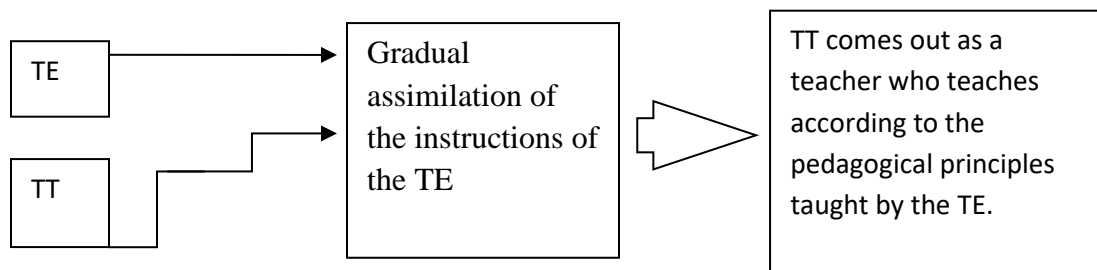


Fig-5: Proposal experimented by Sosibo (2013)

For Sosibo (2013),there is no assured collaboration and the teacher trainee comes as a teacher who is a very good follower of the prevailing norms (Fig 5). In the present proposal, collaboration occupies the central place and the views generated are ‘own views’ for both the trainee teacher and the teacher educator.

The consequence of the CBT based collaboration in the teaching practice programme as proposed through the three steps as proposed here:

- Normally one becomes *committed* to the views that come from her or his own. In the case of Sosibo, the views are of the teacher educator (TE). The trainee teacher (TT) gradually those ideas of the TE. On the other hand, in the present proposal, the views are both of the TE and the TT which arise as a result of collaboration in the spirit of CBT.

- Once a trainee teacher (TT) becomes committed and feels free to explore possibilities she or he comes out to be more *competent* with pedagogy.
- One of the basic characteristics of collaboration is transparency among the collaborators. Once a teacher (TT) becomes transparent she or he becomes *accountable*.
- After enjoying the highest level of the democratic environment in the teaching practice programme, the teacher may like to exercise the same with her or his students as well. The democratic environment nourishes freedom and makes the trainee teacher (TT) more *ethical*.

6. Conclusion:

This paper aims to initiate a democratic environment in the teaching practice programme of a Teacher Education Curriculum where the trainee teachers can develop their views without any conflict with the views of the supervisor (Teacher Educator). It has been proposed that this is possible through adopting the approach of counselling and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). The work has got its motivation from the work of Sosibo (2013) where the trainee teachers were instructed to self-evaluate. It has been finally argued that such an act of introducing the approach of CBT may lead to making the trainee teachers competent, committed, accountable and ethical as well. The work has been developed as a conceptual analysis. It needs empirical verification.

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