



A Study of Teachers' Approaches to Teaching at the University Level

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Vol. 3, No. 1 (Winter 2023)

Pages: 1 – 8

ISSN (Print): 2789-441X

ISSN (Online): 2789-4428

Key Words

Approaches, Professional Development, Higher Education, Teacher-focused Approaches, Learner-focused Approaches

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Abstract: University teachers' methods are essential for students learning. At this point, teachers can teach students how to think critically, which helps them solve problems that are important for a country's social and economic progress. Teachers help students get ready for their future jobs. They also show what to do. So, students must know how their teachers' methods help them. Teachers use complicated teaching tactics and intentions when teaching. The Approaches to Teaching Inventory is a reliable and valid survey tool used in this quantitative study to look at university professors in Punjab, Pakistan. One hundred twenty university teachers were chosen by cluster stratified random sampling. Based on this study, teachers use techniques like Conceptual Change-Student-Focused and Information Transmission-Teacher-Focused. Both public and private universities teach the same way. This study suggests that university teachers should get more training in teaching methods.

Introduction

As a developing country, Pakistan needs educated people who can help it grow and flourish. For this to happen, universities must give students a good learning environment and teach them using effective methods. Pakistan's struggling education system and the country could be helped by university-level studies of how teachers teach (Trigwell & Prosser, 2004). Teachers are essential to the academic and professional growth of their students. In addition, they show students what they should do (Lunenberget al., 2007). Because of this, it is essential to look into how teachers' methods help students learn. The way a teacher runs their classroom is made up of a complex web

of methods and goals that they use to help their students learn.

Regarding education, there are two main ways of thinking: those who put the needs of their students first and those who put the needs of their teachers first. Teachers may choose one method over the other depending on the subject and setting of the lesson (Stes & Petergem, 2014). It has been found that how students are taught, especially in college, affects how they think about learning. The way people are taught may change from one setting to the next. Also, studies have shown considerable differences between academic fields in how they teach. It has been found that university professors in "hard" fields

are more likely to talk about themselves as teachers, while those in "soft" fields are more likely to do the opposite. However, some research shows that the way teachers do their jobs may sometimes depend on something other than the fields in which they specialize (Prosser & Tigwell, 2006). The most important thing a school can do to help its students do better in school and grow as people is to teach them well, which includes helping them develop the qualities of good learners. Successful educational institutions and systems find and train teachers who are very good at what they do and push them to think creatively and work as a team. We must stress that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to education and that schools from different countries and cultures will have different, admirable ways of doing things (Kálmán, 2020). However, there is more and more evidence that specific strategies and methods help students reach their full potential and better prepare them for success in the modern world. No one can "give" someone else knowledge. Instead, knowledge is always made in the minds of those learning. Understanding grows when the learner tests and adds to the mental models they already have.

Teachers need to pay attention to what students say in class, and they are written and spoken words and use that information to guide their lessons and help students develop their ideas. By copying the teacher's methods in this way, students are more likely to be able to learn on their own (Kálmán, 2020). Teachers' pedagogical positions significantly impact how and what students study and how they learn (Richardson, 2005). Studies that compare teacher-centred and student-centred methods show that teachers who focus on lectures and the subject matter use a teacher-centred method. They do this because they know that teaching is mostly about passing on knowledge (Trigwell et al., 2005). So, they put much thought into how the course content is organized, presented, and structured to ensure it is easy for their students to understand. On the other end of the spectrum are teachers who put

their students first and see their primary job as helping their students learn and helping them change their ideas and attitudes. These teachers pay close attention to the work that their students do. They make the classroom more fun (Kember & Kwan, 2002)

Significance of the Study

The main point of this study was to figure out how university professors teach in their classes. Teachers are vital to the academic and professional growth of their students. Students can learn from them since they serve as examples. So, it is essential to determine how teachers' methods help students. The results of this study will help point out the most common ways to teach in higher education. Also, this research will make it possible to do studies in the future with a much larger sample size. This study of the many pedagogical strategies used by university faculty will be helpful to teachers, policymakers, and other important people.

Objectives of Study

Objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the university teachers' teaching strategies.
2. To learn how male and female university lecturers differ from one another in their approaches to teaching.
3. To determine how different university-specific teaching strategies of university lecturers are.

Research Questions

1. How do teachers approach teaching at the university level?
2. How do male and female university lecturers differ from one another in terms of their methods of instruction?
3. What are the universities-wise difference in teachers' approaches to the teaching of university teachers?

Literature Review

Many different ways to teach need to be used in the classroom. Most of the time, this will include small and large group projects and lectures for the whole class. Essential things to think about are how much students participate in their learning and how often they get to tell their teachers how to move forward. Whole-group instruction can be very effective (Kálmán, [2020](#)) when students have enough time to respond and share their ideas during class discussions. Rapid changes in society, globalization, and the growth of technology all pose problems for higher education systems worldwide (teaching and learning at the university level). High tertiary enrollment rates have led to larger class sizes and a more diverse student body regarding age, race, and culture, which puts more pressure on university faculty and staff. Employees also have to deal with budget cuts, shortages of staff and materials, demands for more transparency and accountability, guarantees of product quality, and more R&D. At the same time, there are problems with access, privatization, and competition between institutions (Altbach et al., [2009](#)).

Teaching approaches

One's "teaching approach" could be seen as a combination of their goals and methods as a teacher (Trigwell & Prosser, [1996](#)). Because there is a link between pedagogical methods and teaching ideas, many people think these ideas are the basis for good classroom practices. In the same way, teachers with a particular view of how education should be done are likely to use methods that align with that view. To raise the quality of higher education, we need to pay special attention to how and why professors teach in the classroom. Studies show that these things affect how a student approaches learning (Kember & Kwan-Por, [2002](#)).

Teaching Approaches at the University Level

It was found that teachers' goals in the classroom ranged from just giving students information to

actively shaping how the students thought about what they were learning. So, when it comes to higher education pedagogy, there are two leading schools of thought: those that put more emphasis on what the students learn and those that put more emphasis on what the students learn. In the past, different terms have been used to describe the two main approaches to teaching. Some studies used terms like "content-focused" and "learning-focused," while others used "student-focused" and "teacher-focused" (Trigwell & Prosser, [1996](#)) or "student-centred" and "teacher-centred" (Jacobs et al., 2020). In this study, the terms learning-focused, student-centred, and learning-centred are used interchangeably with content-focused, content-centred, and teacher-centred approaches (Kember & Kwan-Por, [2002](#)). Teachers who focus on a specific subject see their job as spreading information. In a content-focused approach, lecturers often use examples from their work in the field. This way of teaching could be better because it often leads to students learning only the basics (Trigwell et al., 19).

On the other hand, teachers who take a student-centred, constructivist approach to the classroom want their students to learn how to think critically and solve problems on their own. So, teachers use ways to get students to think critically by catering to their interests and needs, getting them involved in the learning process, and making sure they have meaningful conversations with each other. Since there is a link between teachers who focus on learning and students who take learning seriously, this is the best way for teachers to teach (Prosser & Trigwell, [2014](#); Uiboleht et al., [2018](#)).

Approaches to Teaching among University Teachers

Teachers' conceptions of teaching and the methods they employ to instruct reflect their philosophies on the subject. Teachers' ideas about what makes a good teacher are based on what they think works in the classroom and these ideas are consistent over time (Kember & Kwan, [2002](#)).

Teaching philosophies are based on the experiences of university professors and include both the goals and the methods used to reach those goals. These strategies are shaped by both what the students already know and what they think the institution's strengths and weaknesses and the curriculum's design. Because of how teachers think about teaching and how that affects their methods and practices, many teachers do not use methods and techniques that are more advanced than how they think about teaching (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996). Multiple investigations have shown that teachers in different fields of study use teaching methods that are very different from each other. Teachers in "soft" fields did better than those in "hard" fields on the CCSF scale. Also, teachers in the "soft sciences" seemed to defend their teaching methods by talking about their fields' traditions. It was also said that the difference between "pure" and "applied" fields is smaller than the difference between "soft" and "hard" fields (Ylanne et al., 2006).

Professional Development of University Teachers

Hicks et al. (2010) identified four significant themes for the PD of university teachers:

- Embedding a student-centred approach,
- Facilitating the scholarship of teaching,
- Initiating and building up networks and relationships, and
- Introducing staff to institutional policies.

Most of the research in this area has focused on how traditional pedagogical education could help improve student-centred teaching methods. Less attention has been paid to professional development (PD) theories than to what teachers do for PD. There needs to be more research on what university staff members think faculty professional development means. Three different ideas grew, and each one was more complicated than the last. When teachers focus on their comfort instead of their students' learning, they feel better about themselves and put in less effort in the classroom. The academic who puts time and

effort into improving his or her teaching practice, primarily by learning more about the subject matter and trying out new ways to teach, will have a richer, more nuanced teaching experience.

Last but not least, a teacher's view of growth is focused on student learning when growth is done to improve student learning (kind, 2005). Studies show that pedagogical training programs improve how university professors feel about teaching and, to a lesser extent, how their students feel about how they act in the classroom and how much they learn. A questionnaire survey done in the UK found no differences between professors who had and had not taken part in PD programs. The length of training programs for teachers significantly affects how they think and act in the classroom. Even though there is a link here, it is not a direct one. Only pedagogical training that lasts longer than a year has a natural effect on making teachers more student-focused. Once something is good for you, it usually stays suitable for a while. However, academics' lengths of service had less of an effect on how their teaching ideas changed over time (Stes & Petegem, 2014).

Using Conceptual Frameworks to Support Learning

We need to use ideas to make sense of an extensive and different world. Putting them into groups gives them a common ground for learning, talking, and doing. It is essential to understand the many ideas that each subject involves. Concepts like "river," "trade," "city," and "ecosystem" are examples of substantive ideas that make up the content knowledge of the discipline of geography. Cause and effect, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and the importance of historical events are examples of second-order ideas that help decide the main questions and how the knowledge is organized. Often, essential ideas can be found in more than one field. Renewable energy could come up in science, geography, economics, and politics, among other fields. Second-order ideas, like

"change," can be used in history and geography. Each field of study has its own mix of first- and second-order ideas (Meyer & Land, 2003). Finding out which ideas are most important or "key" at a particular stage of a learner's development is an integral part of good teaching, supported by good curriculum and assessment planning. The Cambridge curriculum helps students build a strong foundation by focusing on essential ideas. However, teachers must change them to fit their lessons and curricula and work them into their lessons. Teachers and department heads can better understand their subject and help their students learn more if they give critical ideas serious thought (Meyer & Land, 2003).

Methodology

Because this study was interested in teachers' points of view and surveys can be used to measure the attitudes and beliefs central to the approach, they were chosen as the research method. Quantitative research methods were used a lot in this study. This study was mainly about university professors. For this study, government university professors in Lahore were chosen at random. A questionnaire was used to find out information about the sample. People who filled out the survey were told that their answers would stay private and only be used for scientific research. Teachers were asked to fill out questionnaires about how they taught the classes they were in charge of. Each activity in the classroom was described in a sentence and given a grade on a scale.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researchers attended every single class in every single division of the University that was chosen for this analysis. Teachers were assured that their answers would be kept private, and they were given clear instructions to help them fill out the survey without any trouble. Teachers were told to only think about what they were doing about this study. Researchers asked academics for copies of their finished surveys. SPSS 16 was used to put the data into the computer so that the

teachers' teaching methods could be rated and then found. During this study, this tool was used to come up with both diagnostic and analytical results. First, the average score for each type of teaching style was found, and teachers were put in the right places. A one-way analysis of variance and a t-test on independent samples were used to look at the data. We give the results in the form of a table. For this study, the Teachers' Approaches Inventory was changed so that data could be collected from it.

Results and Data analysis

The major approaches to teaching used by university teachers at the university level

Table 1

Frequency and percentage of significant approaches to teaching used by university teachers at the university level

Variables	Frequency	Percent
CCSF	78	62.5
ITTF	58	37.5
Total	128	100

Table 1 shows that 78 teachers use Conceptual Change/Student Focused (CCSF) at the University level, and 58 teachers use Information Transmission/Teacher-Centered Approach (ITTF). The results show that most teachers at the university level use more than one method to teach.

The differences in teaching approaches between male and female teachers

Table 2

t-test Comparison of Male and Female teachers' approach to teaching

Gender of Teachers	N	Mean	SD
Males	62	3.70	0.91
Females	66	3.51	1.01

Table 4.2 shows no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between how male and female teachers approach teaching at the university level. An independent t-

test showed a slight difference between how male and female teachers at the university level teaching.

The differences in approaches to teaching between teachers of different universities

The teachers from the different universities were compared to the two teaching methods. First, the mean score and standard deviation (SD) of teachers from sample universities were calculated. Then, a one-way ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores of teachers from sample universities on two ways to teach. Each result is shown on its own.

Table 3

ANOVA for teachers using CCSF approaches in different universities

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	P
Between groups	21.762	25	1.783	1.263	0.053
Within groups	112.059	111	0.94		

Table 4.3 indicates no significant difference across universities in teachers using Conceptual Change/Student Focused (CCSF) approaches to teaching.

Table 4

University Wise (public & private) use of teachers' approaches to teaching

Universities	N	Mean	SD
Public	78	37.20	6.127
Private	52	25.57	3.123

Table 4.4 shows that public university teachers use approaches more often (N=78, M=37.20, SD=6.127) than private university teachers (N=52, M=22.57, SD=3.123). Based on the results in the table above, most teachers at public or government universities use different methods than teachers at private universities.

Conclusion and Discussions

The results showed that more teachers than the ITTF method used the CCSF method. The results showed that 39% of the teachers in the sample used the ITTF method, while 61% used the CCSF method. The results backed up earlier research that showed teachers tend to choose one method of teaching over another, with the final choice being based on things like their own beliefs, the needs of their students, and the content of the course (Snyder & Snyder, 2008; & Rippen, Booth, Bowie, & Jordan, 2002). It also found links between how teachers teach, how they feel about the atmosphere in the classroom, and their "conceptions of teaching" (Trigwell & Prosser, 2004). It has also shown us several ways to learn more about education in certain situations. These results back up previous research that showed no difference between how male and female teachers used the CCSF. ITTF was used differently by male and female teachers, with female teachers more likely to use it than their male counterparts. Trigwell, Prosser, Martin, and Ramsden (2005) say that teachers who use ITTF are more likely to emphasize assessment and let students have access to their own notes. If anything, this stops people from learning deeply instead of helping them grow. The study found no statistically significant differences between the institutions' faculty. Researchers found a big difference in how knowledgeable teachers were about the methods they used in the classroom. CCSF was used more often by teachers with less experience than teachers with more experience. There was a link between the number of years a teacher had been teaching and how likely it was that they used the ITTF method. Maybe younger teachers are more likely to use "Conceptual Change." It may be hard for experienced teachers to change the way they do things. These results backed what Trigwell et al. (2005) had found in an earlier study: that new teachers were more likely to use CCSF than their more experienced peers.

Recommendations

It was found that professors' ways of teaching depend not only on the subject they are teaching but also on their academic rank, number of years of experience, gender, and the students they teach. Based on the results, there should be a system for college and university faculty members who want to use a "Conceptual Change -Student Focused Approach" to get continuing professional development. More research could be done to find out, for example, why female teachers and more experienced teachers are less likely to use student-centred techniques and if this is a global or Pakistan-specific trend. This could help figure out how to focus and target such an offer. It is also suggested that the government do things to encourage professors to use new ways of teaching. It was also suggested that university professors try new ways of teaching, like the exploratory learning approach. Experiential learning as a way to teach has many benefits, such as the ability to spark creativity, help correct misconceptions, encourage reflection, and better prepare students for future situations. It works well for many students and is especially helpful for science experiments, coaching sports, and group projects. Other ways to teach in the modern classroom, like online courses, video games, and hybrid courses, are also becoming more popular. Because of this, professors at universities need to use these strategies when they make sense. Using games in the classroom, sometimes called "Gamification," is a great way to get the attention of kids in grades K-12. Gamification is the process of adding game mechanics to situations that are not games in order to make people more interested and motivated. Games are an excellent place to start with kids because they are naturally curious, whether you are talking about complex computer RPGs or playground and board games.

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