

Facilitating Participatory Teaching Methods Among Teacher Educators

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I. INTRODUCTION

Participatory training is an educational strategy where learners are regarded as active participants in the educational process. Their needs and questions, reflection, analysis and strategies for change carry the process forward. Rather than viewing participatory training as merely a set of techniques, its educational thrust is to be viewed to understand its worldview and its aim at creating an experience of personal and collective change for strengthening student's understanding and encouraging students to question what they have always accepted, to critically examine their own experiences and to derive insights through analysis. Learning through hands-on experiences facilitates the learning process, especially when the topics are related to everyday practices and During this training, participants are encouraged to explore and discover for themselves as Knowledge obtained through this way is more easily internalized and put into practice.

This paper introduces the theoretical concept of participatory training methods for developing teaching skills and it analyses the normative orientation of participatory training as fundamental for understanding the methodology and principles it applies in practice on which participatory training is based. It also will be helpful to analyse, alongside the importance of an appropriate learning environment, and the role of the trainer.

II. IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATORY TRAINING FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

Participatory training sees itself as making an educational intervention rather than being a formal education process and it is a non-formal, ongoing process of growth and discovery; a process which activates both trainers and learners in a common learning situation. It also aims to facilitate learning and critical thinking processes about relations of power and In doing so, it leads to a clearer understanding of the totality of an individual's situation, and their potential role in the process of social change. Such type of trainings catering on Participation has to be looked at separately from the term 'training'.

The broad factor guiding the selection of methods is the focus of learning: If the focus of learning is increasing knowledge then the methods used may be lectures, field visits, demonstrations, self-study and If the focus of learning is to increase skills, the methods used are more of practice

sessions, demonstrations, apprenticeship and learning by doing.

Participatory training has several methods which are in vogue in teacher training: A teacher educator has to play several critical important roles to ensure that the learners and learning process are at the centre of all training as per given learning agenda and the educator needs to ensure that there is adequate stimulation to critical analytical faculties of learners and there are occasions to value, analyze, share and reflect upon the experiences of learners wherein the process learners feel empowered and there is enhancement of their self image.

III. OBJECTIVES

- To explain the concept of participatory teaching and its significance.
- To state the major purpose and principles of using different participatory teaching methods.
- To suggest guidelines for developing participatory training skills among teacher educators.

IV. PARTICIPATORY TRAINING METHODS AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Participatory training must be centered on the participants and developed according to their needs and where training is likely to be successful if teacher educators understand why the topic is important for them and as a result of it there will be cases where the situation is new and the facilitator will raise awareness through participatory discussions and the teacher educator will feel about the ownership of the whole process. The main characteristics of participatory training includes:

- Open communication between participants and facilitator
- Participants must be able to pose questions
- Participants must be involved in the whole process (curriculum development, execution, evaluation)
- Participants must actively contribute
- The process should be developed according to the expectation of participants.

Discovery-based learning and learning by doing plays a central role. It is very important that all the information provided and the experiences generated during the training are activity based.

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The salient features (significance) of participatory training principles are as follows:

- Participatory training is participant centered which rises out of specific needs of participants as articulated by them.
- The learning not only imparts new knowledge but also generates awareness and builds skills.
- Learning is derived from the experiences of the learners where activity based learning is key element to participatory training.
- Participatory training requires a learning environment where learners and their experiences are valued and they feel psychologically secure and safe to unlearn, try their new ideas and share their experiences.
- Participation of learners in the entire training process is valued, consequently they develop their own norms, values and take responsibility for their own learning.
- The role of trainer is very crucial. The trainer believes not only in the participatory principles, but demonstrates it as a way of life.

V. TRAINER'S ROLE AND BEHAVIOUR

Thus, in participatory training method, a distinction has been made between a facilitator and an expert in subject matter where the trainer provides knowledge, concepts and builds skills on the subject matter at ease which is co-ordinated with external resource persons or by members of the training team. The role of the facilitator of the learning process is very different which needs special preparation and is a major challenge where Interventions aims at strengthening the learning environment, monitoring the learning process, adapting the pace and depth of coverage, etc. all require skillful facilitation. Therefore, one of the first challenges of conducting a successful training program is preparation of the trainers to be facilitators.

VI. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF USING DIFFERENT PARTICIPATORY TEACHING METHODS

The first consideration of participatory teaching relates to creating a conducive learning environment. Participants

often come to a training programme with fears, doubts, expectations and confusion. Some are informed about the purpose and programme of the training, and some are not, some have been forcibly sent, some have come because they thought that the programme would be useful to them. As a result, the first task in a training programme is to prepare participants to become learners.

- It involves cognitive process of understanding and comprehending.
- It involves cognitive process of reflection to elicit, knowledge, experience, perception, feelings and attitudes.
- It involves sharing of perception, knowledge, feeling, attitudes, values
- It provides a means for sharing at a closer, more intimate level when groups are formed around mutual interests and maximizes motivation by making group more homogenous.
- It provides wider experiences through those of others. Less risk is involved, helps universalize feelings or roles.
- It develops greater sensitivity in perceiving phenomena, verbal/non-verbal communication, enhancement of skills learning which is difficult to describe/state in written form; see activity/interaction in the real life situations.
- It creates affect as a means to view a life situation in the safer context of a game, to develop sensitivity, portray a life situation for developing greater social awareness.
- It recreates situations in which it is impossible to provide participant observation or experience; teach in comparatively safe environment in classroom at the student's pace.
- It enhances capacity to initiate learning eg: identify substantive area of interest and learn to review literature utilizing cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis and generalization to develop understanding of the phenomenon investigated; ability to carry on life-long learning; develop capacity for problem-solving

VII. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING PARTICIPATORY TRAINING SKILLS

TEACHING METHODS	MAJOR PURPOSE FOR USING THE METHOD	SOME MATERIALS TO ENHANCE LEARNING
1. LECTURE Trainer activity • Prepare contents for the Lecture • Promote and Maintain the desire to learn • Confirm that the instructions have been assimilated	Involves cognitive process of understanding comprehending	Use of: Visual illustrations, Black-board, pictures, Diagrams, models, charts, Slides, films, posters

2. SEMINAR/ DISCUSSION Trainer activity • Pose issues for general discussion • Invite comments on the content being discussed • Utilize principles of scientific inquiry: ask for hypotheses, elicit, analyse facts, draw conclusions, make conclusions.(problem-solving approach)	Involves cognitive process of reflection to elicit, knowledge, experience, perception, feelings, attitudes	Use of: Theory, Paper presentation, Case studies, Pictures/posters, Films/film strips/slides, Flashcards/ flip charts
3. PANEL PRESENTATIONS Trainer activity • Providing similar outlines for individual presentations • Briefing about roles for each panel member	Involves sharing of Perception, knowledge, feeling, attitudes, values	Use of: Readings, Experiences, Audio-visual aids
4. SMALL GROUP EXERCISE Trainer activity • Preparation of content for discussion in larger groups • Listing questions to be asked/discussed • Assigning work on a project eg: preparing audio-visual material • Activity in which there is greater risk of revealing self eg: simulation game, sensitivity training	Provides a means for sharing at a closer, more intimate level when groups are formed around mutual interests. Maximizes motivation by making group more homogenous	- Reference material - Craft Material - Role play - Games/Simulation - Tapes/ music - Creative literature
5. VICARIOUS LEARNING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHERS Trainer activity • Selecting activity suited to learner's needs • Selecting materials based on accessibility eg: a film or a client	Provides wider experiences through those of others. Less Risk is involved, helps universalize feelings or roles	Case study films, slides, Students Field workers, Clients Novels/ Short stories Biographies, Autographies

6. CAMPS AND STUDY TOURS/ OBSERVATION OF REAL LIFE PHENOMENA Trainer activity • Structuring experiences • Providing outlines for discussions • Pulling together observations through discussion	Develops greater sensitivity in perceiving phenomena verbal/ non-verbal communication, enhancement of skills learning which is difficult to describe/ state in written form; see activity/ interaction in the real life situation. Observation of social phenomena, eg: poverty, exploitation, power through community field visits (urban/rural)	Use of: Various activities to observe role. Agency programme content and process Visits
7. SELF-LEARNING Trainer activity • Identify learner's need • Tailor the learning to meet the specific need • Highly structured plan eg: programmed learning or no structure to develop initiative and capacity in learner for learning to learn	Enhances capacity to initiate learning eg: identify substantive area of interest and learn to review literature utilizing cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis and generalization to develop understanding of the phenomenon investigated; ability to carry on life-long learning; develop capacity for problem-solving	Use of: Programmed learning materials Teaching kits/ source materials Bibliography Reading course (minimum of teaching/ guiding) Correspondence course
8. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING Trainer activity • Plan the exercise/ suit the specific learning need • Explain the exercise • After the exercise, interpret meaning, provide opportunity for discussion and reflection by the participants and observers	Creates affect- is a means to view a life situation in the safer context of a game, to develop sensitivity, portray a life situation for developing greater social awareness. Sharpens skills, values, attitudes and knowledge	Use of: Games for understanding self or group dynamics Simulation games for practicing skills, Role play, Tapes, Videotapes,, music, Creative literature
9. CANNED LIFE EXPERIENCE Trainer activity • Explain purpose • Follow-up with discussion dwell on cognitive and affective aspects	Recreate situations in which it is impossible to provide participant observation or experience; teach in the comparatively safe atmosphere of the classroom at the student's pace; returning parts of films/ tapes, etc. for discussion	Films Tapes Videotapes Biography Autobiography Case study

VIII. CONCLUSION

Choosing appropriate training methods to achieve the Training Objectives is an important function of a trainer. In addition, to the lecture method, which has already been dealt with in detail in the preceding chapter, we need to have in view few other training methods, basically of participatory nature.

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