



PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH OF TEACHER EVALUATION

K. Manigandan* & N. Santha Kumar**

* Research Scholar, Department of English, AMET University, Chennai, Tamilnadu

** Assistant of Professor, Aadhi College of Engineering and Technology,
Kanchipuram, Tamilnadu

Cite This Article: K. Manigandan & N. Santha Kumar, "Philosophical Approach of Teacher Evaluation", International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education,

Volume 2, Issue 1, Page Number 167-170, 2017.

Copy Right: © IJCRME, 2017 (All Rights Reserved). This is an Open Access Article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract:

Philosophy of teaching, learning and leading is focused on improving student learning and anchored with a commitment to ethical practice. Moreover, it is our obligation both individually and collectively to use research and data to determine the impact we have made on what students know, do and think, to ascertain revisions to instructional programs and assessment practices, and to design appropriate professional growth opportunities. Teachers must be continual learners who are open to modify, adjust and alter their practice in response to the complex, varied, specialized and changeable needs of their students. In addition, teachers have a career-long obligation to add to their knowledge and skill base and to share what they have learned with their colleagues. The needs of our students are so involved and diverse that they require the use of various approaches, viewpoints, and sharing of collective experiences and skills of everyone. Teachers have an obligation to share, influence and inform the school community, their colleagues, and their profession about the best practices that support successful teaching and learning. This is done through coaching, peer advising and program facilitation.

Key Words: CCT, Evaluation, Philosophy & Evaluation

Introduction:

The primary purposes of teacher evaluation are to improve teaching and learning as evidenced by student achievement and to foster the professional growth of new and continuing teachers by providing them with timely feedback on their performance and by making recommendations for assistance and improvement. The role of Evaluation in Teacher Professional Growth is based on a reflective process, where the teacher assumes a more direct role in evaluating his/her performance and in setting a direction for future professional development. It provides the opportunity for the teacher to work collaboratively with the evaluator and other colleagues to develop a multi-year professional growth plan to strengthen or enhance the teacher's performance. This plan includes specific objectives, a plan of action for meeting those objectives and criteria based on the Common Core of Teaching (CCT) for evaluating whether the objectives have been met. Teachers who are resourced properly will most likely be retained within the institute and within the teaching profession.

One of the most important evaluation decisions a school system makes is the decision to hire a teacher. Therefore, it is essential to hire the best-qualified candidates. Well-developed selection procedures based on demonstrated teaching ability as well as on paper credentials ensure that the first and most important evaluation decision is made properly. Hiring the best and brightest teachers enhances the quality of education in an institute to the extent that these teachers are inducted into that system properly. The system should set high expectations for new teachers and provide them with the support necessary to meet these expectations. Once an institution defines how teachers are to share their teaching philosophies and approaches, administrators can also better support and reward the efforts of the faculty (Seldin, 1993).

Role of Evaluation: When There Is Concern About a Teacher's Effectiveness: If there is reason to believe that an experienced teacher is not effective, that teacher's performance must be reviewed and documented to validate the concern. If the concern is valid, then the teacher is given written notice of how his/her performance needs to be improved and should be provided with the appropriate assistance to make such improvement in accordance with current teacher contract agreements and evaluation documents and timelines.

To ensure the board, parents, students and the public that only effective teachers continue in the classroom by:

- ✓ Granting tenure in accordance with Connecticut statutes
- ✓ Documenting learning progress
- ✓ Recognizing teachers for their accomplishments
- ✓ Dismissing teachers who do not meet district standards during the Professional Appraisal
- ✓ Dismissing tenured teachers in accordance with Connecticut statutes.

Teacher Evaluation is About Professional Growth

- ✓ Teacher's professional growth is demonstrated through improved student learning.
- ✓ Teacher evaluation is based on the teacher's documentation of learning outcomes over time.
- ✓ Students benefit when teachers take time to reflect on their work.

Teacher Evaluation is Based on Multiple Data Sources

- ✓ Multiple data sources can be collected individually or in work teams.
- ✓ Classroom observations are a necessary but not sufficient form of data.
- ✓ The shift is from looking at teacher behaviors to focusing on student learning as evidenced by multiple data sources collected by the teacher.

Teacher Evaluation Must Recognize Teacher as Leader

- ✓ Teachers must demonstrate competence in content, teaching practices and learning theories, and student development.
- ✓ Teachers should share expertise with colleagues, contributing to the learning community.

One-Size Teacher Evaluation Does Not Fit All

- ✓ Teacher evaluation should be based on a differentiated system that recognizes the developmental needs of teachers at different stages of their professional growth, and recognizes teacher leaders.
- ✓ Teacher evaluation should develop and support new teachers, grow and support tenured teachers, create and support master teachers, and work with and support teachers in need of assistance.
- ✓ Teacher evaluation should set high standards for the teaching profession and therefore inform hiring, career advancement and, if necessary, teacher termination.

Institute and Personal Professional Goals are Interrelated

- ✓ Goals and objectives are focused on improving student achievement.
- ✓ Goals and objectives are focused on institute improvement.

Teachers' Work is a Significant Part of Administrator Evaluation

- ✓ Administrator evaluation should include documentation of student learning.
- ✓ Administrators should demonstrate support for teachers' professional growth.

The Purpose of Professional Development is to Learn How to Improve Student Learning

- ✓ PD activities should include collaborative work time for teachers to meet and share student work samples and discuss teaching strategies.
- ✓ PD should be focused on self-improvement and should be linked to the district/school goals and objectives for improving student learning.

What is Evaluation?

Craven's definition of evaluation conveys the underlying idea that, despite the variety of types of evaluation, at some level all evaluations are intended to make judgments about the "object" being evaluated—typically a program, by which we mean a set of activities (e.g., components of a professional development program), supported by a variety of inputs or resources (e.g., staff, equipment, money), that is intended to achieve specific outcomes (e.g., teaching skills aligned to standards) among particular target groups (e.g. classroom teachers). Combining the concept of evaluation and the definition of a program, Cronbach et al. (1980) define program evaluation as the "systematic examination of events occurring in a contemporary program to assist in improving this program and other programs having the same general purpose." The key points to be kept in mind, then, are (1) evaluation is a systematic endeavor that (2) involves acquiring and assessing information to (3) influence decision making. In other words, evaluation is about providing data that can be used to make a decision, to establish a new policy, or to take a specific goal-directed action.

What are the Benefits of Evaluation?

Evaluation takes time and resources, so why should you want to evaluate your professional development program? You may even think you already know it works! However, even when a program appears to be effective, the information you acquire through evaluation helps you and others gain a better understanding of your program's effect on your teachers and, ultimately, on your students. This information can, in turn, help you improve your training and make it more efficient. In addition, evaluations can provide information to a variety of people and organizations that are interested in what you are doing, including sponsors and/or donors (state officials, your school board, the district superintendent, and external funders), target groups (teachers and other staff), administrators, and other individuals with a stake in the results of your program (e.g. Evaluation is the "systematic assessment of the worth or merit of some object" (Scriven, 1967). parents, students, and the community). If used properly, evaluations can lead to increased success for managers and staff and can result in service improvements for participants. Evaluations can serve many different purposes. They can help program managers and staff determine what services they need to offer, how well they are providing these services, and the likely consequences of their efforts. Which of these questions, you will answer depends on the specified goals and objectives of your evaluation. How well they are answered will be determined by the quality of the research strategy, how well it is implemented, and the level of resources available to support the evaluation.

Teacher Evaluation Phases:

Evaluations come in different forms, and the information they produce can serve different purposes. Here are some examples:

Identifying service needs. Evaluations can provide data for the professional development needs of your staff (i.e., determining the knowledge and skills your teachers have learned and need to learn), and can help you decide which can be addressed by existing services and which will require the creation of new initiatives. For example, your district may want to conduct a series of evaluation activities to determine what skills your instructional staff need to acquire to develop curricular units aligned with subject-matter standards.

Trying out a new program. In some cases, districts may want to experiment with a new or innovative approach before deciding whether to implement it district wide. This is like a clinical drug trial that is used to determine if the new method is better (or worse) than existing therapies. For example, your district may want to compare the use of summer workshops, training classes during the school year, and an ongoing mentoring model to determine which is the best vehicle for district wide implementation. These options can be evaluated on a “pilot test” basis, using a relatively small number of teachers. The results of this first-stage evaluation would then lead to the selection of a strategy for broader implementation that can subsequently be evaluated as it is rolled out to all your teaching staff.

Tracking program implementation and interim accomplishments. Once a professional development program has been implemented, evaluations can be used to keep track of program activities. These types of data, often used by administrators and found in “management information systems,” help managers to monitor progress against goals and to adjust programs as needed to improve their effectiveness. The types of information you might collect for this purpose could include the number of teachers that have received professional development, and the number that has acquired the desired knowledge or skills.

Evaluations can be used to answer many different types of questions, including issues of program merit (i.e. What is the quality of the professional development program? Can we improve it?), of worth (i.e., is the staff development program cost-effective? Can the same or better results be achieved at lower cost?), or of significance (i.e., how important are the effects of the program? Does the professional development make a difference for teachers? For students?).

Assessing the achievement of program goals. Beyond determining if particular program activities are being implemented as planned, evaluations can also be used to determine whether the overall program achieved its intended purpose. For example, frequently asked questions include, “Did the professional development make a difference; that is, did teachers improve their classroom instruction, and did student achievement increase?” “Under what circumstances were the goals met, and for which participants (e.g., differences across schools, or types of teachers)?” An evaluation can be designed to produce one or more of these different types of information. The decision about what information is desired, however, will have important implications for the design of your evaluation, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

What are the Steps in an Evaluation?

Planning for, and conducting, an evaluation involves a number of steps that can seem complex but are, in many cases, conceptually rather simple. In many ways, it can be like planning a school field trip:

Understand the context. Field trips are not stand-alone exercises, so any good teacher has to understand the overall course of study before deciding how to add pieces to the instructional process. In a similar fashion, evaluators need to understand the program that is being evaluated before deciding how to “add on” an evaluation component. You cannot evaluate what you do not understand.

Decide who will come on the trip. Field trips can involve just a few students and a teacher, but larger excursions need a variety of people with different skills and resources—a bus driver, escorts or chaperones, and guides and docents. Similarly, very small evaluations can be designed and carried out by a single person, but larger projects require that you assemble a team with the right skills and resources to ensure that you are successful.

Determine your destination. Obviously, a field trip requires a destination and some idea about what the students are expected to learn from the experience. In the same way, your evaluation has to have a specified “destination”—that is, you have to determine goals and objectives for the evaluation in advance, as this will guide all of your other decisions, and you have to have “research questions” that indicate what you expect to learn from the evaluation.

Plot your course. Knowing where you want to end up is not enough. You have to know how to get there, how to make the trip as enjoyable and productive as possible, and what hazards to avoid. In evaluation, a well thought out plan is your most important asset. Without it, you cannot be assured that you will be able to answer the questions you want to answer in a way that can support subsequent decisions and actions. In some cases, midcourse corrections are needed to respond to changing conditions, and a backup plan can be helpful in case things do not go as expected.

Gather information along the way. Since a field trip is about gathering information, students will typically have particular things that they are expected to learn about or investigate while on the trip. Evaluators, too, need to collect information along the way, and this information has to be inextricably linked to the research questions that one seeks to answer.

Understand what happened. Good teachers do not want their students to simply collect information, but to learn from the experience in order to reach a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Similarly, evaluators need to analyze and synthesize the information they collect as part of their evaluation to better understand what's going on with the program. Data alone do not represent knowledge.

Tell the story. Often, the best part of a field trip is being able to tell a good story, and this need to tell the story is also true for an evaluation. Without it, no one will know about the experience, or be able to use the information for later decisions and/or actions.

Overall, students should understand what a professor is doing and why (Cerbin, 1996; Way, 1993). Given this information, students may engage more productively in the learning environment while also knowing how to learn and succeed in the course. Some believe that communicating well to students also increases retention (Braskamp & Ory, 1994). All professors exhibit implicitly their teaching philosophies and these are evident to students through syllabi, assignments, approaches to teaching and learning, classroom environment, and student-teacher relationships (Zubizarreta, 1995). The goal of sharing a statement of teaching philosophy is to respect and support students by being explicit.

Integration of Responsibilities:

Teaching, research, and service are the traditional responsibilities of a university professor. The demands of these three areas may fragment a professor's activity and thinking into three or more channels, and it is possible for a professor to prioritize one area and relatively ignore the others. Consequently, the concept that the three activities are to meld together and be expressed in teaching may be lost. Ideally, integration of responsibilities and consequent learning benefits are included in a statement of teaching philosophy.

Relationships:

The relationships the professor creates and maintains are essential to successful teaching. Student-teacher relationships need to be developed to create the desired teaching and learning environment. Interest in, concern for, and respect for students are essential to effective teaching (Bemoff, 1992). Interestingly, a number of descriptions of effective teachers exist; however, few contain the behaviors, attitudes, and qualities students should also exhibit to contribute to the learning environment (Murray, 1995).

Conclusion:

Affirmations of teaching philosophy accelerate personal reflection in a process that can yield professional growth and achievement, as faculty examine whether their actions inside and outside the classroom match their beliefs about teaching. Reflecting and articulating beliefs is an influential process that takes time and commitment.

References:

1. Bemoff, R. A. (1992, March). Effective teaching techniques: A workshop. Paper presented at the National Conference on Successful College Teaching and Administration, Orlando, FL.
2. Braskamp, L. A., & Ory, J. C. (1994). *Assessing faculty work: Enhancing individual and institutional performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
3. Cerbin, W. (1996). Inventing a new genre: The course portfolio at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. In P. Hutchings (Ed.), *Making teaching community property: A menu for peer collaboration and peer review*. Washington, DC: American Association of Higher Education.
4. Cronbach, L. J., et al., (1980). *Towards reform of program evaluation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
5. Murray, J. P. (1995). *Successful faculty development and evaluation: The complete teaching portfolio (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 8)*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.
6. Scriven, M. (1967), "The Methodology of Evaluation", *AERA Monograph Series on Evaluation*, 1, pp. 39-83.
7. Seldin, P. (1993). *Successful use of teaching portfolios*. Bolton, MA: Anker.
8. Way, D. G. (1993). *Teaching evaluation handbook*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Office of Instructional Support.
9. Zubizarreta, J. (1995). Using teaching portfolio strategies to improve course instruction. In P. Seldin (Ed.), *Improving college teaching*. Bolton, MA: Anker.