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Original Research

Pedagogical Approaches in Technical Education: A Case Study of a Hotel Management College in Kathmandu

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Abstract

The quality of technical and vocational education can be assessed from various facets such as teachers, financial resources, infrastructure, teaching methods, curriculum, and evaluation methods. Pedagogy is a crucial determinant of quality technical and vocational education. Hotel management is one such course in Nepal, yet few studies have focused on its teaching methods and the factors influencing these methods. This study aims to explore the pedagogical approaches of faculties in a hotel management college in Kathmandu. Utilizing a case study approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three teachers, guided by the theory of reasoned action to understand how their beliefs, attitudes, and intentions influenced their teaching methods. Findings reveal that teachers primarily use PowerPoint presentations and provide notes to prepare students for exams. Practical labs are incorporated as required by the course. Teachers' methods are influenced by their own teachers, college management, colleagues, and exam deadlines. The study concludes that innovative, work-based learning enhances student learning in technical education, highlighting the need for pedagogical approaches distinct from general education.

Keywords: *TVET, pedagogy, formal teaching, hotel management, Nepal*

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Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training [TVET]) is an essential educational system producing skilled human resources required for the development of the nation. TVET secures both the right to education and the right to work, which promote lifelong learning and contribute to sustainable development through social and economic participation (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015). The success of TVET program is determined by the learning outcome of students determined by the ability of students to perform their job in the workplace.

The learning outcome of TVET students is influenced by different facets like teachers, financial resource, infrastructure, teaching methods, curriculum, evaluation method, etc. Pedagogy is one of the important determinants of quality TVET education. It determines how regular teaching and learning is delivered by teachers to enhance the learning of students. What teachers teach and how do they teach is critically important for educational experience of students. Choosing good teaching methods benefit the entire student. It is important to understand how teachers interact with students, structures the classroom and most importantly how they deliver the content. According to Kapur (2020), to transform knowledge to student tutors must use meaningful teaching- learning method, good instructional strategies, and meaningful resources along with good assessment techniques. Similarly, Persaud (2021) stated the goal of teaching method is to build on student prior learning by presenting the curriculum that must be relevant to student so that they acquired contemporary skills relevant to current job market.

Different facets influence the choice of teaching method in higher education. Those factors are either contextual like curriculum, resource availability, classroom setting, etc. or teachers' cognition or belief based on their own experience (Basturkmen et al., 2004). Some teachers are influenced by contextual factors. Ur (2013) suggested contextual factors like class size, evaluation method and expectation of stakeholders influence the teaching method choice. Likewise, some teachers are influenced by their beliefs. According to Adhikari (2017), some teacher still follow traditional method like Grammer-Translation method to teach English language because they belief this method is effective for them..

Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM) is one of the TVET courses which is running in Nepal. The first institution to run BHM in order to produce qualified human resource for hospitality sector is Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) since 1972 (Thapa & Panta, 2019). In 1999, Tribhuvan University started three years bachelor program of hotel management. Other bachelor programs in hospitality management were started by tribhuvan University from 2003 (Thapa & Panta, 2019). Currently, apart from Tribhuvan University, most of the national universities like Pokhara University, Purbanchal University, Kathmandu University, and Mid-Western University in Nepal are offering the BHM program.

BHM is the technical course and required skills development in students. Many researchers believe that teaching methods required experiential learning in order to develop the skills required for hospitality career (Lyu et al., 2016). With the experiential learning in BHM students will be able to develop interest in subject matter (Sebby & Brown, 2020). Teachers must provide learning by doing opportunity for students. Similarly Huang et al. (2016) claimed that hospitality accounting should be taught based on theory of constraint approach. Likewise Chubchuwang (2016) claimed that academic service and research methods should be embedded while teaching hotel sales management in order to achieve key performance index of students in the study at Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality, Dhurakij University, Thailand. Hence, different researchers suggested different approaches of teaching methods in BHM.

However, I believe that here has been little study made on the facets influencing the teachers' choice of teaching method in hotel management program. Thus, this paper tries to reveal teaching methods implemented by teachers of hotel management and different facets influencing BHM teachers' choice of teaching methods. To meet this objective, this study utilizes the theoretical lens of Theory of Reasoned Action.

Teaching Style Selection Through the Lens of Theory of Reasoned Action

This paper puts the connection of teacher's belief, attitude and intention in the centre for the analysis of choice of teaching methods. To understand how teacher's belief, attitude, and intention influenced the teachers' choice of teaching method, this paper utilizes the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975).

According to the TRA, the behavior of individual is directed by the attitude towards that behavior and perception of what subjective norms like family, peers, and teachers think they should do (Rutter & Bunce, 1989). This theory has been used in various sectors like family planning (Davidson & Jaccard, 1975), consumer behavior (Tuck, 1976), Health behavior (Hill & Rassaby, 1984), drug and alcohol use (Budd, 1986), and many others. Similarly, TRA can be used in influence on teachers' selection of teaching methods. The attitude of teachers towards teaching method and perception of their subjective norms influence them on choosing teaching methods.

If teacher thinks certain method is suited for them or efficient to use, they posit positive attitude towards such method. If their social surrounding suggests them to choose such methods, they will develop the intention to use such teaching methods. And, finally they will develop the behavior to choose such teaching methods.

Methods

To understand the teachers' teaching style, this study applied the case study approach. The main purpose of the case study is to analyze single phenomenon (Thomas, 2019). The single phenomenon can be single incident, person, or events. Case study has two philosophical foundations which are either post-positivist or non-positivist. If researcher assumes and measures objective reality independently, it is post-positivist foundation (Rashid et al, 2019). A case study with a positivist foundation was conducted by researcher like Yin (2014). However, if researcher believes each individual have their own reality and generates multiple perspectives to researchers, it is non-positivist foundation, (Greener, 2008). Researchers like Merriam (1998) and Stake (2005) used a case study approach with non-positivist foundation in their research. This study used a non-positivist foundation. As Yin (2014) suggested, this study selected information-rich cases through the consultation with the principal and program coordinator from Vidhyarthi Hotel Management Institution located at Kathmandu as they are awared on eof the best hotel management college by New Buisness Age PVT LTD. (Gateway College, 2022). To cover the rich information from all directions, we have selected three teachers with different work experiences. There were no female teachers in the Vidhyarthi Hotel Management Institution. Thus, researchers only interviewed male teachers for this study.

Data Collection

The study participants were three teachers (Participant Ram, Participant Bishnu, and Participant Krishna). Ram has been working with Vidhyarti Hotel Management Institution since 2009. Likewise, Bishnu is engaged in teaching job with the institution since 2016. Correspondingly, Krishna has been working with the institution since 2020. There were only two female teachers. But, they were not willing to participate in the study. So, I did not include female teacher in this study. Three participants were asked for their interview availability through phone. With their agreement, I scheduled the interview date. For the interview, I implemented semi-structured interview method because it provides flexibility and helps to gather depth of the information with participants engagement (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). According to Mahat-Shamir et al. (2021), this method helps to understand perspective of individual on one or a few defined themes. All the interviews were conducted face to face with interview duration of 20-30 minutes. I took consent from all the participants to record the interview. During the interview, I carefully listen them. At the end of the interview, I asked them to share their teaching experience which I failed to capture. The behaviors of participants during the interviews were observed carefully. I reflected all the experiences during the interview in the note.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, at first, I coded the transcribed document to make it accessible, analyzable, and shareable data, facilitating rigorous analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of findings (Ranney et al., 2015). Then I categorized the coded data and developed the themes from the coded data, considering the Theory of Reasoned Action. Similarly, I analyzed teaching guidelines available in Vidhyarthi Hotel Management institutions and talked with five students of the institutions to see if the findings from the interview were consistent with the themes developed from the coded data. Besides, I maintained credibility at every stage of the research. I did not impose my preset thinking in the research. Besides, I was ethical in both critical and reflective roles during research. The name of the colleges and all the participants were given pseudonym. Participants were not given any benefits and were not discriminated during the research (Pietilä et al., 2020).

Findings

The analyzed data established teaching methods selection by teachers and reasons behind the choice of such selection. The findings of this study posited that teachers are using PowerPoint to deliver lecture and provides notes. For developing practical skills, they are using lab for the demonstration. Similarly, this study asserted the influence of their teacher, management and fellow colleagues, and final examination schedule plays role for the selection of such teaching methods. The following sections explain the teaching methods implemented by teachers followed by the reasons behind their choice of such teaching methods.

Teaching Pedagogy

Two major themes have emerged in terms of pedagogies employed by teachers.

Harnessing Technology for Dynamic Learning Experience

During the interview, all the participants unanimously agreed on the use of technology like PowerPoint for delivering lectures. They emphasized that the majority of their lectures were accompanied by PowerPoint presentations. According to them, using PowerPoint made them feel comfortable during lecture delivery. Whenever they encountered difficulties in progressing further, the points outlined in the PowerPoint slides helped them regain momentum in the lecture. They organized the key points systematically within the PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, they provided lecture notes to complement the visual presentation. During the interviews, Ram, one of the participants, shared his perspective on the utilization of PowerPoint in his lecture delivery. He emphasized his reliance on PowerPoint slides as a tool for creating visually clear presentations. Ram explained that he meticulously organizes the flow of his presentations, placing emphasis on key points to enhance efficiency in delivery. Moreover, he highlighted the utility of PowerPoint in aiding information recall during challenging moments in lecture delivery. Ram also noted that PowerPoint facilitates content organization, thereby simplifying comprehension for students. Additionally, he supplements his presentations with lecture notes to bolster content retention, thereby combining the advantages of visual presentation with supportive textual aids.

The use of PowerPoint enables teachers to deliver lectures in an organized manner, thereby increasing their efficiency. Furthermore, providing lecture notes assists students

in retaining content. Another participant, Bishnu, echoed similar sentiments regarding the use of PowerPoint in lecture delivery. Bishnu described PowerPoint as a valuable tool, referring to it as a "savior" during teaching sessions. He expressed his comfort in utilizing PowerPoint for instructional purposes, noting its effectiveness in incorporating visual aids such as pictures and charts to elucidate complex concepts. After delivering content through PowerPoint, Bishnu supplements the presentations with lecture notes, recognizing the dual benefits for students. He explained that visual presentations enhance student attentiveness during class, while the provision of lecture notes facilitates concept review and reinforcement. Bishnu further highlighted the prevailing student preference for PowerPoint slides and accompanying notes in contemporary educational settings.

Hence, participants in this study utilize PowerPoint and provide both PowerPoint slides and lecture notes to students. They believe that PowerPoint, as a visual presentation tool during lectures, combined with lecture notes, provides extensive support for student learning. Another participant, Krishna, elaborated on his approach to using PowerPoint in guiding his lectures. Krishna detailed his utilization of PowerPoint presentations, which he employs to incorporate multimedia elements such as pictures, videos, and animations aimed at fostering active engagement among students. He emphasized the inclusion of key points within the PowerPoint slides, facilitating seamless delivery of the lecture content. Additionally, Krishna supplements his presentations with lecture notes, providing complementary material to reinforce the main ideas presented in the slides.

Through the shared experiences of participant teachers, it is evident that teachers at Vidhyarthi Hotel Management Institution utilize technology in their teaching methods, complementing it with lecture notes to aid students in retaining information as needed. The integration of technology, exemplified by the use of PowerPoint presentations in education, represents a transformative force that empowers educators and enhances student learning outcomes. By embracing technology-enabled pedagogies, educators can create dynamic and engaging learning experiences that prepare students for success in the digital age.

Empowering Students Through Practical Learning

Integrating Demonstration Labs in Hotel Management Education The courses offered in hotel management, such as food and beverage, room service, and front office, primarily focus on skill-based subjects. This was confirmed through the examination of course syllabi available in the institution. Additionally, the nature of these courses was discussed with the program coordinator of the program. During interviews, all participating teachers unanimously agreed on the significance of implementing demonstration labs in their teaching methods.

Ram, one of the participants, emphasized the importance of practical classes in his subject, food production. According to him, practical classes allow students to develop the skills necessary for their future careers, such as food preparation. Through weekly demonstrations, students observe and practice while receiving guidance and feedback to enhance their skills.

Krishna shared a similar sentiment, stressing the importance of hands-on skills in teaching room service. He explained that theoretical knowledge alone is insufficient, and practical demonstrations in settings resembling hotel rooms allow students to gain essential skills under his guidance.

Bishnu, who teaches front office management, highlighted the significance of communication and customer service skills. He emphasized the need to provide practical demonstrations in the lab to ensure students gain hands-on experience in dealing with customers effectively.

These experiences indicate that participants integrate demonstrative labs into their teaching styles to enhance student learning. Furthermore, universities prioritize lab sessions by allocating 30% of the total grading to lab performance, as outlined in the course guidelines and syllabi. This shows that the pedagogical approach adopted by faculties in hotel management education, emphasizing the integration of demonstration labs to impart essential skills and knowledge.

Facets Determining Teaching Pedagogy

Three key facets appeared to me guiding the overall teacher practices and these have been discussed below.

Influence of Teachers' Teacher

Through interviews with participants, it was evident that all the teacher participants were significantly influenced by their own teachers. Consensus among them revealed a tendency to emulate specific teaching methodologies observed in their mentors. One participant, Ram, exemplified this influence, stating,

I was highly influenced by one of my teachers and his teaching methods. He meticulously explained concepts using PowerPoint presentations and provided comprehensive notes. I continue to adopt his approach and materials in my own teaching endeavors.

Similarly, Krishna, another participant, articulated his decision-making process regarding teaching styles, stating,

Working as a faculty member in the same institution where I completed my undergraduate studies, I was familiar with the teaching culture and methodologies employed here. Consequently, I opted to mirror the instructional methods utilized by my past teachers, which included PowerPoint presentations, practical demonstrations, assignments, student journals, and examinations for assessment purposes. I find these methods effective and thus integrate them into my own teaching practices.

The pivotal role of teachers in shaping students' preferences and behaviors, particularly in selecting teaching styles, emerged as a recurrent theme. Participant Bishnu emphasized this point, remarking,

I was captivated by the teaching methodologies employed by my instructors. Their adept use of PowerPoint to illustrate concepts was particularly engaging, facilitating my comprehension. Additionally, their hands-on demonstrations in the laboratory were instrumental in honing the practical skills essential for hotel management. Consequently, I find myself emulating their teaching style.

The experiences shared by the participants underscored the significant influence of past teachers on the pedagogical approaches adopted by current educators. Notably, the prevalent use of PowerPoint presentations, comprehensive notes, and practical laboratory demonstrations in teaching practices reflected the enduring impact of mentorship on pedagogical choices.

College Management and Fellow Faculties

Participant teachers highlighted the significant influence exerted by college management and fellow faculty members in shaping their selection of teaching methods. They conveyed that at the onset of each session, they engage in meetings with college management, particularly the program coordinator, to discuss teaching methodologies, roles, and responsibilities. These meetings serve as forums for elucidating the institution's teaching culture and imparting directives regarding course completion requirements. As Ram elucidated,

Upon joining as faculty, I engaged with the program coordinator, who acquainted me with the college's teaching ethos and mandated protocols. I was instructed to furnish slides and notes aligned with the syllabus and to conduct practical labs to fulfill course obligations.

These accounts underscore the palpable influence wielded by program coordinators and principals, who emphasize adherence to prescribed protocols during faculty meetings at the commencement of each academic term. Bishnu elaborated, "*Upon joining the institution, our faculty meeting emphasized the provision of comprehensive notes and slides to aid student preparation for exams. Additionally, we were tasked with conducting practical labs to enhance student skill development.*"

Beyond institutional directives, teachers are also influenced by their peers in shaping their pedagogical approaches. Krishna recounted his initial inclination towards innovative teaching methods such as group projects and academic paper writing, only to be advised by colleagues to prioritize lecture delivery due to time constraints. Reflecting on this experience, he remarked,

Initially, I attempted to introduce novel teaching activities but encountered challenges due to time constraints. Consulting fellow teachers, I realized the pragmatic approach was to focus on lecture delivery and adhere to course guidelines. Thus, I now prioritize PowerPoint lectures and lab sessions in line with course requirements.

These narratives collectively underscore the multifaceted influence of college management and fellow faculty members in shaping teachers' pedagogical choices. The

discourse highlights how professional surroundings, including institutional directives and peer insights, significantly impact teachers' selection of teaching methods.

Meeting Deadline of Final Exam

The participants articulated that the exam schedule significantly influences their choice of teaching methods. They unanimously acknowledged the importance of adhering to deadlines and ensuring students are prepared for final examinations. Utilizing PowerPoint presentations, coupled with comprehensive notes and practical laboratory sessions, emerged as efficient strategies for timely course completion. Despite aspirations to incorporate innovative methods such as group work, projects, and academic paper writing, time constraints often impede such endeavors. Reflecting on the imperative of meeting final exam deadlines, participant Ram remarked,

Upon assuming the role of faculty, I recognized the profound impact of final exam deadlines on our teaching approaches. Prioritizing timely course completion is paramount, especially considering the unpredictable nature of examination dates, particularly post-COVID-19 disruptions. To navigate these challenges, I rely on PowerPoint slides as an efficient means of lecture delivery.

The unpredictable nature of exam schedules necessitates adaptability in teaching styles. Participant Krishna elaborated,

In Nepal, three-hour exams hold precedence for student evaluation, yet the unpredictable final exam schedule poses challenges. The university's erratic publication of exam schedules necessitates a focus on timely course completion. Therefore, I employ PowerPoint presentations for teaching and provide notes, foregoing additional activities due to time constraints.

These experiences underscore the necessity for educators to tailor their teaching methodologies to ensure timely course completion ahead of final examinations. The prevalent use of PowerPoint presentations, provision of notes, and practical lab sessions reflects a consensus among teachers regarding the efficacy of these methods in meeting course deadlines.

Discussion

The findings of this study are explained by TRA. As suggested by the TRA, teachers have positive attitude towards blending technology with lecture notes in their teaching

along with demonstration lab. This positive attitude was amplified to use by the social norms like college management and fellow colleagues. Thus, teachers used such methods in their teaching.

Use of technology like PowerPoint is essential for dynamic learning of students. Many researchers have claimed the use of PowerPoint as efficient methods to implement in the teaching which is consistent to the finding of this study. For example, the study of Alkash and Al-Dersi (2013) on use of PowerPoint in teaching among teachers of Sebha University revealed that PowerPoint is useful technology to deliver the lecture in English language learning classroom. Likewise, PowerPoint is beneficial for memory recall and implements animation and variety of colors for explaining the key concept (Szabo & Hastings, 2000). Whenever, teacher finds it difficult to continue during lecture, the points in the PowerPoint can help teacher to recall the information and helps in continuing the lecture. Technology can enhance learning by improving communication and practice opportunities (Buckenmeyer et al., 2016). Thus, use of technology is important for better learning opportunities. However, some researchers argued against the use of PowerPoint in teaching. For example, the study of Xingeng and Jianxiang (2012) suggested that there is disadvantage of using PowerPoint in teaching. They explained that certain issues like no interaction with students during lecture using PowerPoint, uncontrolled speed, and too much of irrelevant information will hamper the teaching efficiency and learning outcomes among students. This is not consistent with the finding of this study.

Similar to PowerPoint, providing lecture notes is useful teaching methods. It can improve the learning of students as student can go through lecture notes whenever they need the information. Many researchers believe that teaching with guided notes helps students to improve the learning of students. In particular, the study of Gharravi (2018) on students of Shahrood University of Medical Science showed that students learning and exam performance were increased when teacher provided guided notes. The study of Chen et al. (2017) also had similar findings. From their study, they claimed that teaching with providing guided notes helped student to perform better. This study also showed that teacher provides lecture notes to prepare student better for the exam. They believed that lecture notes are useful for student to recall the knowledge they gain during the lectures. Thus, finding of this study is consistent with previous studies.

Practical lab is another useful method of teaching to impart hands-on skills among students. From the study of physical sciences teachers' perception of the implementation of practical lab, Gudyanga and Jita (2019) revealed that physical sciences teachers have a positive perception of implementing lab in their teaching. They believed that lab will help students to gain the required skills. The study of Shana and Abulibdeh (2020) has similar findings. They claimed that the implementation of practical work in teaching has helped the student to improve their science score, and they recommend including labs in teaching methods. The findings of these studies are consistent with this study.

These discussions show that TVET education follows general education pedagogy. However, this is not enough for gaining competencies (Khoza, 2021; Ramamurthy et al., 2020). Thus, pedagogical innovation like work based learning is needed in hotel management. For gaining occupational competencies work based learning is crucial (Billett, 2013). In TVET, learning by doing helps students develop occupational skills (Rijal, 2021). Thus, teachers in hotel management should incorporate work based teaching in their pedagogy.

There are many aspects like classroom environment, course syllabus, and influence of social environment that determine the teaching pedagogy of teachers. The study of Genc and Ogan-Bekiroglu (2004) revealed that educational major, professional development, and years of experience influence teachers to choose teaching methods. The study of Balachandran (2015) on factors influencing the teaching style of math teachers showed that classroom environment, student behaviour, and lesson structure (course syllabus) are the major factors influencing math teachers to adopt a teaching style. Similarly, the study of Yang et al. (2023) claimed that the psychological perceptions like performance expectancy and effort expectancy and external support conditions like professional development support and teachers' performance assessment mechanism are the major factors to influence vocational teachers' acceptance and use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in China. Unlike the findings of many researchers, this research suggests a role of teachers, college management, and exam deadlines as the major aspects influencing teachers to choose teaching methods in the formal setting of technical education.

Conclusion

Teaching method is one of the important determinants of quality TVET education. It determines how lesson is delivered by teachers to enhance the learning of students. What teachers teach and how do they teach is critically important for educational experience of students. Different facets influence the choice of teaching method in TVET. This study has brought the teaching methods implemented by hotel management teachers and revealed different facets influencing the teachers' choice of teaching method in BHM college.

The findings of this study showed that hotel management teachers are using PowerPoint for lecture delivery. They provide notes to make student prepare for the exam. And, as per requirement of the course teachers are incorporating practical lab in their teachings. They find these styles of teaching efficient. The findings also revealed different facets influencing them to choose such teaching methods. Firstly, all the participants agree that they are influenced by their teacher and following their methods of teaching in the class. Secondly, this study finds that college management and fellow colleagues (teachers) are important facets in influencing teachers' choice of teaching method. Finally, this study shows that meeting the deadline of the exam or finishing the course on time is another factor influencing the teachers' choice of teaching method. These findings are supported by the Theory of Reasoned Action. Teachers have positive attitude towards their teaching method which was supported by the social norms. Thus, they have the behavioral intention to follow such methods. The study concludes that innovative and work based learning among the students enhances their learning by doing in technical education. The pedagogy of technical education is expected to be different from that of general education.

The findings of this study can be helpful to teachers and managers in hotel management institutions. The finding can help teachers to understand the effective teaching methods for hotel management course. They will also be aware of influencing facets on their teaching style. Similarly, management can use these findings to see if the teachers follow the effective teaching methods in their institution and can be helpful in teaching evaluation.

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