



RESEARCH PAPER

**Exploring Teachers' Perceptions and Practices Regarding
Instructional Planning: A Multiple Case Study**

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PAPER INFO

Received:

July 15, 2020

Accepted:

September 05, 2020

Online:

September 30, 2020

Keywords:

Instructional
Planning,
Multiple Case- Stud
Perceptions,
Practices,
Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to explore teachers' perception and practices about Instructional planning at secondary school level. The study employed multiple case study design to explore and compare the different strategies and approaches between the cases that were being employed for instructional planning. This study explores the phenomenon by using purposive sampling technique i.e. sample of two cases (one each from Lahore and Narowal district) of Punjab; eight male teachers from each sampled school with two teachers from each of the four compulsory subjects (English, Urdu, Islamiat, and Pakistan Studies). The qualitative data collection sources included semi-structured interview guide for school teachers, classroom observation protocol for teachers, and documents review related to instructional planning. The instruments were validated and improved through experts' opinion and pilot testing. Furthermore, Triangulation approach was used to cross verify the data. The results revealed that most of the teachers in the two cases were in favour of implementing instructional planning for quality teaching; but only a few of them were executing it in their classroom teaching. Additionally, most of the teachers were not aware of need based instructional strategies; students' cramming was being emphasized during teaching

Introduction

The most vital skills needed for effective teaching is instructional planning and strategies (Martel, 2009). Instructional planning consists of the development of the steps teachers expect to follow while they are instructing students toward a curricular goal or instructional objective. Planning for instruction is one of the most

important skills teachers need to be successful in the classroom (Reiser & Mory, 1992).

Porter (2006) described four different kinds of curriculum that teachers use in the planning of instruction. The intended curriculum is the learning outcome the teacher desires the students to achieve as a result of the lesson. The enacted curriculum is what which is actually delivered regardless of what was the intended. The assessed curriculum reflects the communication of what was learned from the student to the assessor. The learned curriculum is the actual learning outcome experienced by the students, and again the learned curriculum may or may not align with the intended, enacted, or assessed curriculum. Thoughtful lesson planning allows the teacher to outline the intended curriculum and devise ways to ensure that the enacted, assessed, and learned curricula are in harmony with each other.

The common elements of instructional planning found across research studies and reports are goals, objectives, teaching strategies, materials, feedback, and assessment (Freiberg & Driscoll, 2000). With the greater use of technology in classrooms and the occurrence of web-based tools, it makes sense that a lesson-planning framework would emerge which proposes the use of a variety of technological tools in the development of instructional plans.

He and Hartley (2010) suggested teachers start creating a lesson planner in which they should identify link and embed content into the lesson plan. Skills, behaviors, and processes that are used to assist student learning and achievement are acquired through practice and experience. Knowing what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach are a set of procedures used by education professionals. The development of skills, such as lesson planning, implementation of instructional strategies, continuous assessment, data driven decision-making, and classroom management, are necessary for effective instruction and speak to the importance of educational pedagogy and the underlying theme of competent educators (Bransford & Darling-Hammond, 2005).

The role of instructional planning and strategies in classroom is never ignored. The knowledge of instructional planning and strategies for teachers encourage students learning through available resources, value pedagogy of collaboration, and value the multiple ways of problem solving. A competent teacher should be well aware of special methods of teaching different disciplines. Such skills ensure the maximum learning in classrooms (Government of Pakistan, 2009). Hopkins (2005) argued that "effective instructional planning and strategies are essential for successful teaching" (p. 4).

Pakistan is a developing country. If Pakistan has an aim to become the developed country of the world, Pakistan has to reform its education system. Therefore, there is need to design such system of education from kindergarten to postgraduate level that has a productive disposition. Quality teaching practices and quality education system is not possible without diligent and quality teachers. The

teachers should have multi characteristics so that they can motivate students to quality learning. Quality learning is only achievable through quality teaching.

Instruction is a systematic process in which every component i.e. teachers, students, materials, and learning environment are crucial to successful learning (Dick & Carey, 1996). Effective instruction enables students to acquire specified skills, knowledge and attitudes.

During effective instruction, students can be motivated well. To motivate students in the instruction process, all factors must be determined well. During determination process, the following principles are important: Begin the planning process by clearly identifying the general goals and specific objectives students will be expected to attain; plan instructional activities that are intended to help students attain those objectives; develop assessment instruments that measure attainment of those objectives; revise instruction in light of student performance on each objective and students attitudes towards instructional activities (Reiser & Dick, 1996).

Material and Methods

This study employed qualitative approach. It was an exploratory study and there were three sources of data collection including semi-structured teachers' interview guide, classroom observation protocol for school teachers and documents review related with instructional planning. The educators, who were serving in public secondary schools and had minimum 2 year teaching experience, were selected as the sample of the study. Major themes out of the narratives were identified by the researcher. These themes were coded and then interpreted. The factors of the interview guide and classroom observation protocol were taken from the literature. The instruments of the study were validated first by taking experts' opinion from the advisor and then different professors of the concerned area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select teachers who had been associated with the field of education more than two years. The purpose of selecting experienced teachers (having at least 2 year experience) was to get insight in order to deeply understand the problem at hand. The sample comprised of 16 male secondary school teachers of district Lahore and district Narowal of Punjab province. The study was delimited to only two districts of Central Punjab (Lahore and Narowal); furthermore, only compulsory subjects (English, Urdu, Islamiat, and Pakistan Studies) of 9th grade were included for classroom observations. The interviews and classroom observations were conducted with prior consent of the participants.

Procedure

The teachers' interview guide and classroom observation protocol were developed and validated by taking the experts' opinion of the supervisor and three qualitative research scholars of the field. The framework of the study was shared with them and evidence of construct and content validity were ensured before

proceeding with data generation. The study was conducted in true research spirit. The participants were approached by the researcher. Time was taken to conduct the interviews and classroom observations of the teachers of compulsory subjects (English, Urdu, Islamiyat, Pakistan Studies). Any details about the concept of this research were also given where asked. The research questions, interview questions and probing questions were shared with the participants. Any details about the concept of this research were also given where asked. The researcher visited the schools to conduct the interviews. The voice recorder was kept with the researcher; with their permission the whole interview was recorded. Any ambiguity was later clarified to the interviewees to avoid misunderstandings. The interviews were then transcribed completely. Similarly classroom observations were conducted; time table of the 9th class was already taken from the school administration before making observations. Any ambiguity was later clarified to the research participants to avoid misunderstandings. The classroom observations were took place in Case A school from March to May, 2018 during school year. Overall almost 70 observations were made about the instructional planning practices of the teachers during classroom teaching in both of the cases i.e. case A and case B. Every sampled teacher was observed almost 4 to 5 times to watch and evaluate their teaching. A well-informed co-researcher assisted the researcher in the acquisition of these observations. The process of data collection was encompassed of two phases. The first phase was the classroom observations in which the researcher was participant observer. Totally, 70 lessons of four compulsory subjects were observed; each lesson took about 30 minutes. However, for data analysis 70 lessons were selected due to the degree of clearness and relevance. Therefore, data of two observations was left due to their low quality. Transcription of collected data was the second step. After that, codes were assigned to teachers to maintain participants' confidentiality. The researcher took position at the back of the room to observe the class teachers instructional planning practices. The researcher observed and noted every aspect of the teaching process minutely. In addition, to avoid loss of any piece of data, some field notes were also taken on classroom setup, teacher gestures and behavior in the class to help the researcher to have an ongoing analysis of the data. All ethical considerations were met for this study. Prior permission and time were taken from the participants of the study. The data were shared with the participants and confidentiality of the data was insured by not using it for other than present research activity and by keeping it anonymous.

Findings

In this study the teachers were asked about the role of instructional planning in quality teaching. The researcher found that all the teachers had positive point of view regarding role of instructional planning in quality teaching. They considered instructional planning highly important and crucial for quality teaching. It was found they were in support of instructional planning for quality teaching. They said instructional planning plays vital role in quality teaching by providing clear goals and objectives regarding the lesson; consequently, a teacher becomes confident and

well-organized after gaining grip on the content to be presented. They considered that instructional planning is the backbone of all the teaching process because without proper planning success is not fruitful; a well-planned teacher is well-organized and highly composed because nothing will be missing during teaching. Therefore, it is important for quality teaching, because students' learning will improve.

The second research question was to examine the Instructional Planning practices of the secondary school teachers. The results of the two cases explored that majority of the teachers did not plan their instruction; only a few teachers were found to plan their instruction on daily basis. It was also observed that they were used to maintain their daily diaries by writing only topics and page number of the lessons to be taught. It was found that detail lesson planning was not being followed by the majority of the teachers in all four cases of district Lahore and district Narowal. It was found that most of the teachers less focused on continuous internal assessment of the students' performance. Majority of the teachers believed in summative assessment.

After classroom observations, the study explored that teachers emphasized the cramming and memorization of different concepts after delivery of lessons. As there were overcrowded classrooms in both districts; therefore, there were students of mixed abilities in every classroom. Furthermore, their mental abilities were also different from each other. So, to have better results all of the teachers followed the practice of revision of lesson. At the end of the lesson completion in every classroom, it was revised by different students in the presence of the teacher. Therefore, it is concluded that teachers' emphasis is on students scoring and grading. It was also found that students' creating writing skills was not being emphasized during classroom teaching.

The study also revealed that in the context of Narowal, teaching of English was not different from teaching of English in the context of Lahore; Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was the dominant way to teach English and teachers hardly got any opportunity to practice language skills in the classrooms. Likewise, the teachers of Urdu, Islamiat and Pakistan Studies less emphasized the required pedagogy during their classroom teaching. Therefore, in the light of the results of the study, it was concluded that most of the teachers hardly focused on developing problem solving skills among students, team work and cooperative leaning. It was found that majority of the teachers almost never organized instructional activities effectively; while a few (2,3) were found competent who regularly organized instructions for effective lesson.

The reasons behind this approach to the teaching of English are; lack of purposefully trained teachers, non-availability of in-service courses for secondary level English teachers, memory driven exam system, overcrowded classrooms, teachers' work load, shortage of resources and lack of ongoing support system.

After comparing both of the cases, it was also concluded that instructional planning practices of the participants of the Case A (school of district Lahore) were slightly better more proficient and motivated in performance of their professional duties as compare to instructional planning practices of participants of case B (school of district Narowal); As a few of the participants they were found to be using instructional planning during their teaching. Furthermore, they were found more motivated and in performance of their professional duties as well. Additionally, their classrooms were more disciplined and organized during classroom teaching. Another important finding of this study is that communication skills and pronunciation of English teachers of district Lahore was stronger as compare to district Narowal.

Summing up the two cases, it can be stated that instructional planning is not being implemented on a regular basis by secondary school teachers. Only a few teachers had been found to utilize detailed lesson planning on daily basis. Majority of the teachers was not following this practice due to overcrowded classrooms, time constraints and extra duties imposed by the authorities on teachers. Therefore, they were being adopted traditional ways of teaching.

Results and Discussion

In this study the teachers were asked about the role of instructional planning in quality teaching. The researcher found that all the teachers had positive point of view regarding role of instructional planning in quality teaching. They considered instructional planning highly important and crucial for quality teaching. It was found they were in support of instructional planning for quality teaching. They said instructional planning plays vital role in quality teaching by providing clear goals and objectives regarding the lesson; consequently, a teacher becomes confident and well-organized after gaining grip on the content to be presented. They considered that instructional planning is the backbone of all the teaching process because without proper planning success is not fruitful; a well-planned teacher is well-organized and highly composed because nothing will be missing during teaching. Therefore, it is important for quality teaching, because students' learning will improve. The results of this study were consistent with the study of Bellon and Colleagues published in 1992. They determined that instructional planning performs several important functions that include: providing the best possible learning opportunities, providing students with the special needs and accommodations they need, providing direction and guidance to the substitute teachers, providing adequate coverage of the learning expectations, and allocating time appropriately.

Panasuk and Todd (2005) also concluded that lesson planning is a systematic development of instructional requirements, arrangements, conditions, materials and activities, as well as testing and evaluation of teaching and learning. Furthermore, it involves teachers' purposeful efforts in analyzing the learning needs and developing a coherent system of activities that facilitates the evaluation of students' cognitive structures.

The present study also explored that majority of the teachers did not plan their instruction; only a few teachers were found to plan their instruction on daily basis. Additionally, they were used to maintain their daily diaries by writing only topics and page number of the lessons to be taught. It was found that detail lesson planning was not being followed by the majority of the teachers in both of the cases of district Lahore and district Narowal. These results are also consistent with the views of Nawab (2012), he found that during the data collection process, most of the English teachers were not used to lesson planning. Only a small number of teachers were found with full or partial lesson plans. It was interesting to note that some of the teachers were not familiar even with the format of lesson planning.

It was found during classroom observations that most of the teachers did not use information and communication technologies like computer and multi-media during teaching due to lack of skill and non-availability of facilities at school level. This result is consistent with a worldwide survey conducted by Pelgrum (2001), of nationally representative samples of schools from 26 countries, he found that teachers' lack of skills and knowledge is a major obstacle to using ICTs in primary and secondary schools.

Similarly, Ahsan and Rafaqat (2012) conducted a descriptive study on the topic of "Multimedia Applications in Pakistani Education" they found that multimedia as a tool for interactive learning is not in use in Government schools of Punjab. Additionally, none of the teachers have been trained to use multimedia during their pre-service teacher training programme nor have they been given opportunity of multimedia training during in-service training programme.

The present study found that majority of teachers was teaching the subject of Pakistan Studies through lecture and discussion method, they ignored the cooperative learning strategy and field trip strategy. The was supported by Malik's study (2012), he concluded that majority of teachers use lecture strategy as the main teaching strategy for teaching of Pakistan studies at secondary level and majority of teachers consider lecture strategy the best for teaching of Pakistan studies as compare to some other strategies like inquiry, discussion, cooperative and project strategy.

It was found that the most of the English Language teachers used Grammar Translation Method (GMT) during teaching and students' creative writing skills were less emphasized in classroom teaching. This finding is supported by Awan and Mehwish (2016), they concluded that most of the teachers teach their students by using Grammar Translation Method instead of Direct Method. They are in the favour of GTM because it is most suitable and effective method for teaching English language at secondary level.

In public schools, teachers merely used the group activity in classroom because it needs much time and extra space for sitting arrangement of the students. It is supported by the Young (2007), he concluded that group activity is not calm

activity because time and space are required to carry out an organized group activity in successful manner.

Alam ,Awais, Maqsd, Bukhari, Nadeem and Khatoon (2018) concluded that teachers used only lecture and discussion strategies for teaching the subject of islamiat compulsory and all teachers supported that students should understand the concepts and memorize it. It was also found that students were careful about other subjects like Mathematics and Physics, Chemistry etc. And they considered Islamiat and Pakistan Studies easy subjects.

After classroom observations the study explored that teachers emphasized the cramming and memorization of different concepts after delivery of lessons. At the end of the lesson completion in every classroom, it was revised by different students in the presence of the teacher. It was also found that students' creating writing skills was not being emphasized during classroom teaching. Similarly, Rehman (2004) concluded that the assessment system of Pakistan is based on rote stuffing and rote memorization. Teachers had directly taken the selected and constructed response items from text books and majority of public school teachers used model papers for the preparation of BISE (Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education) examinations.

The study also concluded that modern methods of assessment were not being employed during classroom teaching and students' knowledge and memory skills are more focused. The results of this study are also supported by Khatak' (2012), he concluded that the assessment techniques employed by schools only judge memory skills of the students and do not assess the affective psychomotor domains. The teachers do not do justice to the work in their marking of answer scripts due to their lack of proper training. Only information is tested and the characteristics of whole personality are ignored. Likewise, Shagufta and Afshan (2018) concluded that in Pakistan assessment system of secondary and higher secondary level focuses on testing knowledge only; the whole personality, affective and psychomotor domains are ignored in assessment process. Furthermore, students' learning is measured in the assumption of memorization and rote learning.

Conclusions

The main conclusions in the light of findings are as follows.

The study was aimed to explore secondary school teachers' perception and their classroom practices about instructional planning. The study concludes that most of the teachers are not implementing instructional planning during their teaching; only a few (2 or 3) of them are following it in their practice. Most of the teachers are in habit of maintain daily dairies neglecting important aspects of instructional planning. The classrooms are overcrowded having students' strength 50 to 70 in a class. Additionally, the study concludes that there is no major difference in the teaching practices of the teachers regarding instructional planning.

Furthermore, the teachers in both of the cases are being adopted the traditional methods of teaching. However, the classroom practices of the teachers of district Lahore are slightly better as compare to classroom practices of teachers of district Narowal.

As a whole, the study concludes that majority of the secondary school teachers found in this study is not following instructional planning during their classroom teaching. On the other hand, a few of them are found in habit of maintaining daily diaries. The sampled school teachers partially used lesson plans in classroom, while most of the school teachers less focus on detailed lesson during their teaching. Majority of the teachers directly start the lessons from textbook and focus is laid on book reading strategy, ignoring the important aspects of lesson plan format. Furthermore, it is concluded that most of the teachers are following formative assessment on oral basis; whereas classroom activities are being less emphasized during teaching.

Additionally, most of the teachers use grammar translation; lecture and question answer method for teaching the subject of English, Urdu, Pakistan Studies and Islamiat (compulsory); whereas cooperative learning and project strategy are missing during teaching. Consequently, the teachers are still focusing the rote memorization for students' better scores; old traditional ways of teaching is being adopted for teaching and modern teaching methods are less emphasized during teaching. Furthermore, the students' creative writing skills are not being promoted during classroom teaching; even though, the SLOs are not met at the completion of every lesson. The teaching strategies are slightly aligned with textbook SLOs and National Curriculum.

A few teachers used brain storming, storytelling and teaching through daily examples while teaching the subject of Islamiat compulsory. The common thing, the researcher observed in sampled schools is that only a few teachers assign written homework to their students and use oral feedback strategy instead of taking written test. It is also concluded that more than half of the teachers almost never organize instructional activities effectively; while a very few are found competent, frequently organizing instructions for effective lesson.

Summing up the above mentioned cases, it can be stated that if we want to have better achievement of students then, there is dire need to implement instructional planning for quality teaching at secondary level on regular basis during classroom teaching. As instructional planning plays vital role in teaching, therefore, it must be followed by teachers to have quality learning of the students. On the other hand, the students' creative writing skills should be promoted through different activities at secondary level.

Recommendations

Based on this research study, the following recommendations were given:

1. The higher authorities may provide planners to the teachers at secondary school level; additionally, to improve students' performance instructional planning practices may be ensured by the teachers at secondary school level. Furthermore, government may allocate budget provision to provide instructional material and gadgets to schools at secondary level as well.
2. As majority of the teachers was not in habit of doing instructional planning (lesson planning) which is an important aspect of effective classroom teaching; therefore, it may recommended that secondary school teachers promotion may associated with regular classroom instructional planning practices.
3. Selection of appropriate teaching method was reported another weak area pointed out among secondary school teachers; the teachers may trained in such a way that they can understand most of teaching methods and their proper use in a particular and relevant situation. It is therefore, recommended that higher educational authorities may appoint need based subject specialists at secondary level for improvement of teaching learning process and for quality teaching.
4. As we are living in 21st centaury; therefore, keeping in view the modern trends of teachers' professional development government may pay special attention for the up datedness of teachers' professional development programs to have compatibility with the modern world. As information and communication technology is the important requirement of effective teaching; it is therefore recommended that teachers training institutions may equipped with latest technologies to equip the teachers with modern teaching techniques and methodologies, so that they may incorporate it during classroom teaching for students better achievement.
5. As this qualitative study was delimited to two schools of two districts of Punjab; however, future research studies may conducted by increasing number of districts in other provinces to investigate teachers classroom practices regarding instructional planning at different levels as well.

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