Selected Factors of Teaching Effectiveness: Perceptions of Apprenticeship Trainers

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It is theoretically impossible to measure a teacher’s effectiveness by measuring only student achievement (Biddle & Elmore, 1964; Kelley, Coker, & Soar, 1984). There is no scientific method of separating what and how much a pupil learned from the teacher, due to all other extraneous list of traits attributed to the teacher (Skara, 1997). Kindsvatter, Wilen, and Ishler (1988) addressed seven assumptions and beliefs basic to effective teaching.

The quality of teaching is directly contingent upon the quality of the decision making that precedes that teaching.

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• Teaching is a learned behavior.
• Instruction should be based on the most recent educational reform in our nation’s schools should force us to examine the underlying factors of teaching effectiveness. As such, there are issues that must be forcing us to examine the underlying factors of teaching effectiveness. As such, there are issues that must be examining the factors that are held together by a common theme.

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The Journal of Technology Studies

The data on apprenticeship trainers indicated that a majority (89.9%) of the respondents were male, 10.1% were female. This finding is supported by data reported by Dembicki (1999). According to Dembicki, the U.S. Department of Labor aims to increase by 10% the total number of women participating in apprenticeship-related areas.

The characteristics collected from apprenticeship trainers also revealed that over 30% fell within the 35 and 45 age bracket. In addressing the educational background, the results showed that the highest among the 51 questionnaire items was reported as important (M = 3.01-3.97) by respondents in this study. Significant differences were observed among means on 6 of the 10 factors. Duncan’s multiple comparison test was used to determine the nature of difference among the four groups of apprenticeship trainers. This analysis revealed that first-year apprenticeship trainers were significantly different from fourth-year and third-year apprenticeship trainers on the faculty-student interaction factor. The data also revealed that first-year apprenticeship trainers were significantly different from third-year and fourth-year apprenticeship trainers on the communication and feedback factor. Second-year apprenticeship trainers also reported a similar pattern for the communication and feedback factor. Communication and feedback are essential tools for helping students understand cognitively what is being taught and for instructors to be at all times available to respond to student questions. In this factor, for the most part, refer to a process for the most part, and to the influence of students’ lives. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for internal consistency was .8817.

The instrument was administered by the coordinator of the seminar on the third day of this four-day event. However, this time period of administration proved to be less than ideal as indicated by a return rate of only 53% (79) usable questionnaires. Caution is warranted in generalizing the results beyond the accessible sample.

What We Learned and What It Tells Us

Data were analyzed with the SPSS for Windows computer program. Appropriate statistics for description were used including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Factor analysis (principal components with varimax rotation) was used to identify the underlying factors. The analysis resolved the 51 items into 10 factors including a very important factor, communication and feedback factor. Communication and feedback are essential tools for helping students understand cognitively what is being taught and for instructors to be at all times available to respond to student questions. In this factor, for the most part, refer to a process for the most part, and to the influence of students’ lives. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for internal consistency was .8817.

The remaining nine factors each explained relatively small amounts of variance. The atmosphere for respect factor comprised of a single questionnaire item. The atmosphere for respect factor comprised of a single questionnaire item. A strict sense, a single item cannot constitute a factor. However, “respect” for apprenticeship trainers must in this context be taken as a special case—an important outlier. The fact that it did not correlate with other questionnaire items did not diminish its value. Indeed, this item had a factor loading of .79, very similar to, and virtually the highest among the 51 questionnaire items. DeBarros (1999) reported that, in general, students respect teachers.

Apprenticeship trainers agreed that it was very important (M = 4.50, SD = .73) for instructors to be at all scheduled classes. Respondents were more likely to agree that it was unimportant (M = 2.65, SD = .98) for students to assist in composing test questions. Almost three fourths (72.54%) of the items were reported as important (M = 3.01-3.97) by respondents in this study.

Significant differences were observed among means on 6 of the 10 factors. Duncan’s multiple comparison test was used to determine the nature of difference among the four groups of apprenticeship trainers. This analysis revealed that first-year apprenticeship trainers were significantly different from fourth-year and third-year apprenticeship trainers on the faculty-student interaction factor. The data also revealed that first-year apprenticeship trainers were significantly different from third-year and fourth-year apprenticeship trainers on the communication and feedback factor. Second-year apprenticeship trainers also reported a similar pattern for the communication and feedback factor. Communication and feedback are essential tools for helping students understand cognitively what is being taught and for instructors to be at all times available to respond to student questions. In this factor, for the most part, refer to a process for the most part, and to the influence of students’ lives. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for internal consistency was .8817.
significant differences were observed among means on 5 of the 10 factors (classroom management, explanation of procedures and policies, professional development, communication and feedback, and atmosphere for respect) of teaching effectiveness as essential for evaluation and assessment of apprenticeship trainers.

First- and second-year apprenticeship trainers were more likely to report low mean ratings for the 10 perceived factors of teaching effectiveness. This probably implies that these two groups have not received sufficient training in the area of teaching effectiveness. Preservice training should therefore be made available to prospective apprenticeship trainers in the area of teaching effectiveness. Mentoring should be provided for incoming and younger apprenticeship trainers.

Research should be conducted to determine the relationship between teaching styles and teaching effectiveness of apprenticeship trainers.

Improving teaching effectiveness is not merely a function of effective reward system, but rather a collaborative function of several factors working together to improve not only what goes on in the classroom but to improve quality of faculty. Apprenticeship trainers must learn a body of knowledge essential for teaching, how to prepare for instruction, and how to deliver instruction to become effective.

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References


