Prospective Teacher Educators’ Awareness towards the Key Components of NLP

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Abstract

This study explores the prospective teacher educators’ awareness towards the key components of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP is “the study of the structure of the subjective experience”. It is ‘individual difference’ that differentiates the students in their academic achievement. The learning style survey recognizes the idea of an individual’s learning tendencies. Thus the knowledge on identification of ‘individual difference’ among the students is required for a teacher. It is suggested for school administrates to use NLP in schools for ‘establishing rapport’ with students, staff, and the community. If teacher educators learn to establish and maintain rapport with students, they could make their academic career victorious. ‘Emotional and cognitive boosters’ is to bring an emotional environment to evoke the learners engagement. NLP view is that it is better to develop ‘flexibility’ to learn through several different strategies, rather than rigidly using one. Elicitation, by definition, refers to evoking a state by one’s behaviour. So teacher educators, by having the knowledge of elicitation, could elicit the right response from the learner. Hence this paper focuses with Individual difference, Rapport creation, Emotional and Cognitive boosters, Flexibility, and Elicitation & of prospective teacher educators. By adopting normative survey method, this study was conducted with a sample of 45 prospective teacher educators studying at the Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University, Truchirappalli. A research tool, on ‘Neuro Linguistic Programming Awareness Assessment Scale’ (NLPAAS) developed and validated by the investigators, was used for data collection. Differential statistics were used for the analysis of data. Findings reveal that prospective teacher educators are to improve their knowledge on NLP.

Key Words

I. INTRODUCTION

Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) was developed in 1970s by Richard Bandler, and John Grinder, Santa Cruz (Bostic St.Clair & Grinder, 2001) quoted by Tosey and Mathison (2010). They started to study the structure of subjective excellence. Because they were disturbed with the question: what makes the difference between the merely skilled people and the people who excel in life? To find out answer for the question, they observed the excellence of the excellent people in life and found the concept “Neuro Linguistic Programming”. The title ‘NLP’ reflects the principle that a person is a whole mind-body system, with consistent, patterned connections between neurological processes (‘neuro’), language (‘linguistic’) and learned behavioural strategies (‘programming’) (Dilts et al 1980:2) cited by Tosey & Mathison(2010). Baker and Rinvuluci (2005) defined NLP as ‘a complex set of beliefs, skills and behaviours that can help a person communicate more accurately, effectively and respectfully’ quoted by Winch (2005). O Connor and Seymour (1993) describe NLP as “the art and science of personal excellence art because everyone brings their unique personality and style to what they do Science because there is a method and process for discovering the patterns used by outstanding individuals in any field to achieve outstanding results. This process is called modeling, and the patterns, skills and techniques are being used increasingly in counseling, education and business for more effective communication, personal development and accelerated learning” Cited by (Trevor, 2005). “NLP is the art and science of excellence” is a definition by O’Connor and Semmour (1994) cited by Heap (2008). NLP is defined as “an approach to language teaching which is claimed to help achieve excellence in learner performance” (Millroad, 2004). A common alternative definition for NLP, by Dilts et al (1980), is “the study of the structure of the subjective experience” cited by Tosey and Mathison (2008). Then the NLPist introduced the idea of Modeling to achieve the same result and become successful in life (If one can achieve something, anybody can achieve that with the same strategy). It is not exception to education field also.

NLP can also be viewed in strategic perspectives too. In the United Kingdom, pilgrims conducts courses for ESL (English as Second Language) teachers wanting to use NLP. Topics include effective communication, developing rapport, recognizing and working with all learning styles, improving their effectiveness, goal setting and information gathering (Pilgrims, 2005) cited by Winch (2005). NLP is said to encourage English Language Teachers to come up with ways to deliver the programmes and supply even more variety in their teaching styles (Tompkins and Baker, 2005) cited by Winch (2005).

A study of teacher trainer workshops run to enhance teachers’ awareness of NLP in classroom discourse had similar findings, this time for the students (Winch, 2005). In the past 40 years or so, a great number of learning-style researchers have made a strong claim that students can achieve better academic results when their preferred learning styles are congruent with teaching style (Barbe & Swassing, 1979; Carbo, 1983; Quinn, 1993; Ford & Chen, 2001; Mangino & Griggs, 2003; Lovelace, 2005) cited by Ren, (2013). Mally (1989) and Dilts (1990) have further developed a spelling strategy for children based on NLP. Results from this research indicate that training groups using NLP showed significant improvements in spelling from pre to post test compared to controlled group (Kudliskis, Voldis & Burden, Robert, 2009).
NLP techniques were also successfully applied to other fields such as management, medicine, sports, business, law, and education (Karunaratne, 2010; Tosey, Mathison, & Michelli, 2005). But education especially "Teaching" in this world is highly regarded as a noble profession since it is educating and generating the future citizens. Such a noble profession 'Teaching' deals with the young minds with the characteristics such as creativity, hard work, aspiring for great achievements and enthusiastic, etc... On the other hand, teachers face everyday a bundle of problems in their classroom or in their workplace due to their lack of teaching competency. Students in the classroom also differ in their internal processing system. So it is a high time for teachers to know NLP, learn NLP and use NLP techniques tactically in order to make Teaching-Learning process effective both for the teachers as well as learners. Effective utilization of NLP and its techniques will pave the way for the growth and development of teaching - learning process.

Blackerby (2002) believes that students know how to learn in the classroom and perform the academic tasks assigned to them and often they do not; and a large number of students have been traumatized by their inability to succeed in school. This kind of thoughts emerged the concept called 'Individual difference' based on their learning styles. Each student differs from others. To cope up with their learning styles, NLP offers techniques to influence the students. Numerous studies recognize the importance of teacher skills development, particularly in the areas of management, levels of interaction, questioning, positive atmosphere, teacher expectations and challenges (Churchs, 2009).

NLP has greatly contributed to develop the teachers with these skills. Recent developments in education field stress the importance of teaching and effective classroom behaviours to achieve success. In Indian classroom, students from heterogeneous are normally distributed with reference to their intelligence and other demographic variables like age, gender, locality and educational qualification. Hence, the investigators concentrated on the relevant components such as Individual difference, rapport creation, emotional and cognitive boosters, flexibility, and elicitation which are found to be effective for classroom behaviours to deal with mixed group of students.

Teacher educators were chosen from the Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University in which students are from different geographical locations and multi-socioeconomic background. They are the future teachers and teacher educators too. So, they could be the representative of the population. If a teacher educator possesses certain skills and teaching competence, in turn teachers who shall be produced shall win the confidence of their students. Effective teaching requires fostering good relationship with learners. Learners open their minds to the teacher who rules their hearts and souls (Pishghadam, Shayesteh, Shapoori, 2011).

Creating rapport with learners is essential to be an effective teacher in this modern era. Neuro Linguistic Programming and its related applications can be effectively applied to improving the educational outcomes of students, teachers, administrators, and students' community. Using NLP principles one can utilize behavioral flexibility approach to the educational process in new
and exciting directions (Sumrall, 2010). But our teaching system still is fond of following the very old traditional methods which make their mind create a vast gap between the teacher and students. To change the conservative attitude instilled in the mind of the teachers, creating rapport with the students and behavioral flexibility are now considered to be fundamental and effective in teaching learning process.

The study on “validation of an NLP Scale and its relationship with Teacher Success in High schools” by Pishghadam Reza, Shayesteh Shagheyegh, Shapoori Mitra in 2011 with a sample of 175 EFL (English as Foreign Language) teachers, aged between 18 – 48 years and ranging from 1 to 22 years of teaching experience reveals the significant positive relationship between NLP and Teacher success. Results of the study reveal that eight factors namely Flexibility, Anchoring, Elicitation, Modeling, Individual Differences, Leading, Establishing Rapport and Emotional and Cognitive Boosters represent the underlying structure of the NLP instrument.

The findings of the study also suggest use of NLP factors in education. “Learners and professional educators can apply these tools to virtually any aspect of learning and teaching: Self-management, presentation skills, use of language for precise communication, study skill, classroom management, and teaching design and so on. Many practical applications to teaching are described by Churches and Terry (2007) cited by Tosey and Mathison (2008). In that way, NLP may contribute to teacher success and hence the study makes its attempt to ascertain the awareness of teacher educators towards NLP for evolving certain productive policy decisions.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Does NLP contribute to teaching learning process?
- Are teacher educators of Bharathidasan University aware of NLP and its applications?
- Do Age, Gender, Teaching experience and Discipline play a role in determining the use of NLP?

III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Normative survey method is mostly used to find out the existing fact of the phenomena. This study also engaged to find out the teacher educators’ awareness towards the key components of NLP. Thus, the researchers chose normative survey method for the present study to collect the data from teacher educators and to find out their awareness in NLP.

IV. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted with a sample of 45 prospective teacher educators who pursue M.Ed and M.Phil at the Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University, Truchirappalli. A Sample of 45 students was chosen by Simple random sampling technique for the present study. Out of 45 samples, 20 teacher educators are male and 25 of them are female. They belong to multi-disciplinary. The main reason for selecting teacher educators as sample of this study is that they are prospective teacher trainers who are expected to set a good precedence in terms of their educational practices before the teacher educators in colleges.
V. CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOOL

The investigators developed the questionnaire namely “Neuro Linguistic Programming Awareness Assessment Scale” (NLPAAS) with five dimensions such as Individual difference, rapport creation, emotional and cognitive boosters, flexibility, and elicitation. The questionnaire consists of 26 items representing all the five dimensions. (Individual difference (5 items), rapport creation (5 items), emotional and cognitive boosters (5 items), elicitation(5 items), flexibility(6 items). The questionnaire was set with the four options such as: ‘Strongly Agree’ ‘Agree’ ‘Disagree’ ‘Strongly Disagree’.

For establishing face validity and content validity, the tool was subjected to the advice of a panel of experts. Based on their expertise, the tool was fine-tuned with necessary modification. Cronbach’s Alpha test was adopted to measure the reliability of tool because Cronbach’s alpha test determines, how closely related a set of items are as a group or the internal consistency or average correlation of items in a survey instrument to establish its reliability (Reynaldo & Santos 1999, Bruin, 2006). It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. The reliability coefficient for the tool is 0.612.

VI. RESULT & INTERPRETATION

Percentage analysis is normally used to compare one variable with other variables. Here percentage analysis is made to compare the Teacher Educators’ awareness towards the key components of NLP in detail based on the demographic variable. Comparison among the components is also clearly understood with help of the percentage analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Sub variables</th>
<th>Individual Difference (%)</th>
<th>Establishing Rapport (%)</th>
<th>Emotional &amp; Cognitive Boosters (%)</th>
<th>Flexibility (%)</th>
<th>Elicitation (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Discipline</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teaching experience</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 5 years</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis reveals that female teacher educators were found to have 75% of awareness towards NLP where male teachers were aware of only 68% of NLP in the different dimensions. It is found that from the above table the teacher educators were found to have 69% of awareness in ‘Flexibility’, 72% of awareness in ‘Individual Difference’, 70% of awareness in ‘Rapport Creation’,
83% of awareness in ‘Emotional and Cognitive Boosters’ and 73% of awareness in ‘Elicitation’. It can be inferred that Teacher Educators were aware of the importance of these components and they are likely, to be flexible with students, to understand the individual difference among the students, to elicit right responses from the students, and to create rapport with the students. Student-teachers can be well-trained in their B.Ed programme to become a teacher with teaching competency so that they can win the confidence of their students. Knowledge of ‘Rapport Creation’, ‘Emotional and Cognitive Boosters’, ‘Individual Difference’, ‘Flexibility’ and ‘Elicitation’ can be taught to the trainees along with effective classroom management skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Responses on “strongly agree” (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Differences</td>
<td>24.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Rapport</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional &amp; Cognitive Boosters</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen, from the above table, that Teacher educators are to have better awareness in ‘Elicitation’, ‘Flexibility’, compared to other components such as ‘Individual Difference’, ‘Establishing Rapport’ and ‘Emotional and Cognitive Boosters’. It is clear that a periodical orientation is required to sharpen their skills of NLP mentioned alone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>72.10</td>
<td>6.223</td>
<td>3.317</td>
<td>0.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>79.00</td>
<td>7.450</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SD = Standard Deviation
* Significant at 0.05 level

It can be seen from the above table that there is a significant gender difference (p=0.002, t=3.317, p<0.05). The ‘p’ value for the variable ‘Gender’ 0.002 (t=-3.317, df= 43) is found significant at 0.05 level. It shows that there exists a significant difference in the awareness of NLP among prospective teacher educators in terms of their Gender.

Female teacher educators’ mean score is higher than that of their counterparts. Hence female teacher educators were found to have better awareness of NLP than that of their counterparts. This result is also supported by a study conducted by Pishghadam Reza, Shayesteh Shaghayegh, Shapoori Mitra (2011). They state that gender is a related variable to study NLP. This difference in terms of Gender in the present study is due to the demographic background of the sample. Therefore, Gender plays a vital role in NLP studies.
The 'p' value for the variable 'Age' 0.583 (f = 0.546, df=2,42) is not significant at 0.05 level. It shows that there is no significant difference in the awareness of NLP among prospective teacher educators in terms of their Age. Though Pishghadam Reza, Shayesteh Shaghayegh, Shapoori Mitra (2011) recommends that Age is also a related variable to NLP factors, the recommendation is not fit to the sample of the present study. So age does not play any implications in this study.

The 'p' value for the variable 'Discipline' 0.369 (f= 1.021, df=2,42) is not significant at 0.05 level. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the awareness of NLP among prospective teacher educators in terms of discipline. Findings of the previous research with the same variable state that language teachers have higher NLP awareness. Though result of the present study is contradicting with ‘f’ test of the previous study, there lays a little difference in percentage analysis regarding disciplines (Arts 70%, Language 76%, and Science 74%). Based on percentage analysis, Language teachers have scored 76% which shows that they have higher NLP awareness. So there is a difference in discipline but it is not so significant.

The 'p' value for the variable ‘teaching experience’ 0.420 (f= 0.886) is not significant at 0.05 level. It also indicates that there is no significant difference in the awareness of NLP among prospective teacher educators in terms of teaching experience. The finding of pervious research done by Pishghadam Reza, Shayesteh Shaghayegh, Shapoori Mitra (2011) with variable teaching experience also says that there is a negative relationship between NLP and teaching experience (r=0.12, P<0.05). This adds strength to the present study to state that teaching experience do not play a significant role in NLP.

Regression is a statistical measure that attempts to determine the strength of the relationship between one dependent variable (usually denoted by Y) and a series of other changing variables (known as independent variables). It is also a statistical process for estimating the relationships among variables. Regression is calculated in the study to find out the influencing components of NLP in teaching-learning process.
TABLE V: REGRESSION ANALYSIS TO FIND OUT THE INFLUENCING COMPONENTS OF NLP

**Model summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.988</td>
<td>.976</td>
<td>.972</td>
<td>1.275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), elicitation, individual, rapport, flexibility, cognitive

**ANOVA-b**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>2533.427</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>506.685</td>
<td>311.818</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>63.373</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.625</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2596.800</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), elicitation, individual, rapport, flexibility, cognitive
b. Dependent Variable: total

**Coefficients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>95.0% Confidence Interval for B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>2.143</td>
<td>1.974</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rapport</td>
<td>.928</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexibility</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elicitation</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.302</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: total

It can be seen from the above model summary table, a value of R (0.988) indicates a good level of prediction and the adjusted R Square (R², the coefficient of determination) 0.972 indicates that as many as 97.2% of variances could be predicted from different dimensions of NLP components such as Individual Difference, Rapport Creation, Emotional and Cognitive Booster, Flexibility and Elicitation in the test. It is the further indication that these components were found to be effective for developing teaching competency of the Teacher Educators in their teaching-learning process.

The ANOVA table shows that the independent variables statistically and significantly predict the dependent variable, F(5, 39) = 311.818, p < .0005 (i.e., the regression model is a good fit of the data). The multiple correlation coefficient showed that there was a positive correlation among the dimensions of NLP to develop teaching competency of teacher educators. Significant value .000 for all the five components in the coefficient table reveals that all the five components are equally influencing components of NLP in teaching-learning process.
VII. FINDINGS

- Overall awareness of teacher educators towards the key components of Neuro Linguistic Programming is 76%.
- Female teacher educators have higher awareness towards the key components of NLP than the male teacher educators.
- Teacher educators studied language as their discipline is better in their NLP awareness than teacher educators who opted for other disciplines.
- It was found that teacher educators did not have adequate awareness on “flexibility”.
- It was also found that teacher educators did not have adequate awareness in “rapport creation” with the students.
- The teacher educators were found to be aware of “emotional and cognitive booster”.
- All the five components such as Individual difference, Rapport creation, Emotional and Cognitive boosters, Flexibility, and Elicitation were found as equally contributing factors of NLP to teaching-learning process.

VIII. IMPLICATIONS

This study is of helpful for teacher educators to develop their teaching competency by utilizing NLP techniques. Teacher Educators, in general, have got only 69% of awareness in ‘Flexibility’ and it could be suggested to take extra effort to improve their tendency to be flexible with the education system to achieve the outcome targeted. Further exploration of this study is that Arts Teacher Educators are lacking in NLP awareness. Special attention could be given teacher educators to develop NLP knowledge. As many as Teacher Educators have only 70% of awareness in ‘Rapport Creation’ which is the need of the hour to deal with the students. Individual Difference of the students needs to be considered in mind at the time of teaching-learning process. But Teacher Educators are aware of only 72% in Individual Difference. It could be taken care of. It could be stated that Teacher Educators are aware of Emotional and Cognitive Boosters. So the components such as Individual Difference, Rapport Creation, Emotional and Cognitive Booster, Flexibility and Elicitation serve as techniques for effective teaching. By adopting these components, Teacher Educators can improve their effective classroom behavior. Another worthy contribution of this study to the educational field is that it will be of assistance for policy makers to improve the teacher educators teaching competency by including NLP techniques in the B.Ed. and M.Ed. curriculum.

IX. CONCLUSION

Yero (2001) believes that NLP will find a new way to education “a shift of focus”. Knowledge about Neuro Linguistic Programming for a teacher is essential because it is much relevant to the teaching field. For prospective teacher educators, based on this study, it is recommended to stress the importance of making individual difference among the students, Elicitation, Emotional
& Cognitive Boosters while teaching, being flexible at times and creating rapport with the students and colleagues. Richard churches (2009) also explains the need and importance of NLP as research has reinforced the central importance of teaching - learning and effective classroom behaviours in achieving school effectiveness along with the importance of leadership. As a ‘toolkit’ of approaches for developing personal effectiveness, influence and communication, NLP offers a wide range of approaches to support existing pedagogy and practice.

REFERENCES


AUTHORS’ BIOGRAPHY

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