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PROFESSIONAL CULTURE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND ITS IMPORTANCE

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Abstract:

A professional culture is essential in the Teaching- Learning process, as it bridges the gap between academic theories and real-world application. It fosters workplace-oriented attributes such as accountability, collaboration, and ethical conduct. An educational institution aiming to enhance the quality of education for national development must create a work environment that cultivates a strong professional atmosphere. The honesty, empathy, conduct and good communication are crucial for strengthening teachers' professional engagement. Professional culture significantly impacts the job satisfaction, motivation, and professional growth (Achmad et al., 2022). A professional culture that supports collaboration, professional development, and well-being is capable of enhancing teachers' engagement and performance.

Key words: Professional, Culture, Academic, Workplace, Educational, Institution, Honesty, Empathy, Conduct and Communication.

Introduction:

Education is one of the most important factors for fostering resources of our nation. In this juncture, the Teachers and their behaviours contribute a lot for the development of our nations. At present, the teachers are facing challenges of delivering professional service to their Students –Teachers through dynamic and creative Teaching Strategies and also curtail their professional development by Institutional leaders holding the administrative power and perform / act autocratic behaviour in their working environment. In this way, they cannot get mental satisfaction. If the situation is changed, they can create favourable environment to make use of their knowledge in their academic activities. If the Institution wants to strengthen the quality of education for the development of nation, it should create favourable work environment to improve the professional environment. So, the quality of Teacher Education is purely based on the Teachers Academic involvement in their working environment by providing academic

freedom to select Methodological procedure for their teaching and students learning process. At present, the Teachers require professional culture to show their efforts in their development of teacher education.

Professional Culture:

Professional culture in educational institutions refers to the shared values, beliefs, rituals, and behavioral norms that shape how teachers, students, administrators, and parents were interact. It indicates the learning environment, impacting academic achievement, staff motivation, and innovation, and is largely influenced by the institution's leadership style and historical background

Elements of professional Culture:

The following elements are necessary in the working environment to strengthening the involvement in their profession. There are:

i. Honest and Unbiased leaders:

Teachers expect the heads and administrators of their educational institutions to be honest. So that the teachers can perform their duties with full dedication and make the best use of available resources.

ii. Professional Conduct:

Disrespect and lack of recognition for accomplishments are indicators of negative workplace cultures. It's critical to avoid the toxicity that arises from inconsiderate comments made by heads and other employees, keeping in mind that this can include micro aggression such as mistaking others as more junior than their actual role in an organization.

iii. Meaningful Work and Opportunities:

Recognizing a future and a sense of direction within an organization enables employees to accept and support the culture. Even the most positive work culture will suffer when employees do not feel their work is meaningful or makes an impact. Therefore, when employees find their work to be meaningful and see opportunities to grow their career or life goals within the institution, it intensifies their commitment.

iv. Open Communication:

Fostering an organization where employees can share their experiences and selves through candid and honest conversations (with one another and with Heads) can play a strong role in creating a shared trust that is critical to a positive culture.

v. Empathy:

A workplace that fosters empathy among its employees contributes to a positive culture. Empathy, the ability to feel or understand another person's experiences from that person's frame of reference, can help improve an employee's ability to feel valued and to know they can safely express themselves in an open and honest manner in the working place. When employees are treated with empathy at work, they are more likely to feel valued, strengthening their connections with one another.

Contribution of professional culture in the learning process:

A professional culture in student learning is essential because it bridges the gap between academic theory and real-world application. It promotes workplace behaviors like accountability, collaboration, and ethical conduct. By experiencing these standards early, students are better equipped for modern career demands.

The necessity of embedding a professional culture extends far beyond simple classroom management; it acts as the foundational blueprint for a student's holistic development and future career journey.

Key reasons :

Bridging the Gap to Institution: Translating academic concepts into practical execution. Real-world professional cultures emphasize deadlines, resourcefulness, and effective time management.

Building Collaborative Mindsets: Fostering teamwork. Professional settings require individuals to navigate diverse perspectives, manage conflicts, and work together toward a shared objective, mirroring real-world corporate environments.

Developing Soft Skills and Etiquette: Clear communication, empathy, and active listening. A professional culture teaches the students how to make network, write formal emails, and present themselves with confidence.

Instilling Accountability and Ethics: Fostering personal responsibility. Students who learn in a professional-style culture understand the consequences of their actions, the importance of academic/professional integrity, and how to handle constructive feedback.

Enhancing Employability: Equipping students with the ability to compete in the job market. Employers highly value individuals who already possess an understanding of workplace practices and professional conduct.

Impact of professional culture on working place:

The professional culture of an educational institution influences various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the community at large (Molly and Karen, 2009). Understanding the impact of this and meeting the needs and expectations of stakeholders is crucial to building a positive and inclusive culture. The Professional culture has a significant impact on teachers work satisfaction, motivation, and professional growth (Achmad et.al., 2022). The professional culture that supports collaboration, professional development, and well-being can increase teacher engagement and effectiveness. Conversely, a poor culture with minimal support, heavy workloads, and ineffective communication can lead to burnout and high turnover rates. In the views of students, the professional culture of teachers of an educational institution shapes the experiences and outcomes and personal growth of students (Samuel and Uma, 2012). It encourages students to take an active role in their learning, critical thinking skills, and build positive bonds with peers and teachers.

Responsibilities of leaders in fostering professional culture:

Institutional leaders play a vital role in shaping the culture of their workplace. To create an effective environment, leadership can employ several strategies:

Celebrating success: Establishing rituals and traditions that highlight the achievements of both teachers and students.

Inclusive decision-making: Moving away from rigid hierarchies and adopting "servant leadership" that empowers all colleagues and students to express their perspectives on institutional improvement.

Professional Development: Fostering a continuous learning environment for teachers, ensuring they have the resources to adapt to modern pedagogical shifts and technology.

Professional Culture in Improving Collaborative Activities:

Another important aspect of professional culture is the collaboration between various stakeholders. In the educational institutions, they are represented by students, teachers, and parents. All of these groups need to communicate and cooperate closely to reach the highest outcomes (Gregory, 2009). Teacher-student communication occurs much more frequently than teacher-parent communication. However, it indicates that the teacher and students have good understanding; this culture will enhance the quality of teaching and learning process. Therefore, the professional culture is essential for strengthening the quality of education in the present situation.

One of the approaches of arranging friendly and trusting relationships between institution and students' parents is demonstrating how much educators care about their student's health and safety. The professional culture plays an important role in this process. It is relevant to say that there are numerous options for better communication.

Professional culture and academic collaboration rely on shared values, transparent communication, and psychological safety to break down institutional wise. Fostering this environment requires moving away from traditional individualism toward interconnected teams that create knowledge, align on mutual goals, and support distributed leadership.

Role of head's of the institution to create effective professional culture working environment:

- i) Maintaining effective communication between teacher and administrators, students and fellow teachers. This communication should be transparent, pro active and time bound.
- ii) To provide opportunity to share the information between fellow teachers.
- iii) To provide adequate infrastructure facilities to teachers in their working environments.
- iv) Create favourable climate to newly joined Teachers and experience teacher educator to share the responsibility to each and every one in the institution.
- v) Give mutual respect to each other.
- vi) Chances to create the situation to work collaboratively in order to complete the work in a successful manner.
- vii) Provide opportunity to all teachers to participate academic- related programme like seminars and conferences and share the information that they have learned from programme with their fellow workers that should be practiced in the working environment.
- viii) Provide responsibility to teachers for further restructuring of curriculum in professional work.

Conclusion:

A professional culture is needed in education to improve student learning, support teachers academic growth, and build trust among staff. It ensures accountability, encourages teamwork, and creates safe environments where both teachers and students can succeed. In the working environment, the teachers, students and administrators trust each other, share open goals and work in teams to build new knowledge and avoiding conflicts within and with others and it brings to innovation in the teaching and learning process and another way to utilize the human resources in efficiently.

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