

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS OF VETERINARY COLLEGE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Instructional skill has been conceptualised as set of teaching behaviors, which are especially effective in bringing about desired changes in pupils. It is one of the key factors for student learning. Researches have shown that judicious use of various instructional skills can enhance the learning upto a considerable limit. The use of such skills is more relevant in the case of skill oriented studies like veterinary sciences. Student here has to acquire the knowledge and skill to deal with various aspects of veterinary and animal husbandry practices. In this context, proper use of instructional skills by the teachers is very important. The present study was an attempt to know students' perception on instructional skills of veterinary college teachers. The results revealed that the teachers were not properly using some instructional skills and therefore there was a need to train them on this aspect.

Key words : Instructional skills, Teacher, Student, Learning, Veterinary.

INTRODUCTION :

A veterinarian's job is more of an art than a science. The person here uses his imagination along with his skills and knowledge that he acquires primarily through formal veterinary education. As such the aim of veterinary education is to build individual competent who can lead the society towards progress through his contribution in livestock development. In this process, the teachers have a great role to play. Besides all other qualities, instructional skills of teachers are very important one, which governs student learning to a great extent. Teaching skill can be defined as set of teaching behaviors, which are especially effective in bringing about desired changes in pupils. Dosajh (1977) found that the skills involved in teaching were introducing the topic, questioning, dealing with answers, stimulus variations, use of teaching aid and other equipment, non-verbal cues, reinforcement, use of illustrations and examples, lecturing, explanation, encouraging group discussion, planned repetition, teacher liveliness and closure. Gupta (1979) observed that some factors like black board work, correcting oral mistakes, explaining difficult points, general knowledge, hand writing, knowledge of subject, maintaining discipline, power of oral expression of main points and use of material aids are helpful in class teaching.

A review of the professional literature indicates that though a considerable amount of research has been conducted on instructional skills of general college teachers, a limited study was reported of agriculture college and no systemic study has been found in the field of veterinary education in India. Therefore, considering the role of instructional skills in the classroom teaching

and its importance in professional education like veterinary sciences, the present study was undertaken to know students' perception on instructional skills of veterinary college teachers.

METHODOLOGY :

The study was conducted in the College of Veterinary Sciences, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Uttaranchal, India. Undergraduate students of the college were the respondents of the study. In order to get adequate sample size, 30% students were selected from each of the five-year degree programme in Veterinary Sciences (B.V.Sc. & A.H.). Again among those 30% students from each year, each 10% were taken from three different categories (Good => 80% marks, Average = 60-80% marks and Poor = <60% marks in semester final examination) depending on their academic performance. A total of 100 students were included in the sample. Care was taken to include both male and female students.

A questionnaire was developed on the basis of suggestions made by Dosajh (1977) including four major skills (Entry behaviour, Content competence, Questioning and Closure) which were further subdivided into sub skills/ sub components. Data were collected through the questionnaire and percentile analysis was done.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

Entry behaviour: Appropriate entry behaviour helps teachers to introduce the lecture in an interesting way so as to focus attention immediately on the topic. It sets the pace for teaching. Good entry behaviour helps the audience to fully understand the purpose and structure

of the lecture and gets ready to absorb the materials to be covered. An attempt was made to know different ways in which teachers begin the class, under the sub - heads, activity of teacher soon after entry, manner of beginning the class, manner of specifying objectives and techniques of attracting attention of the class. Majority of the students reported that soon after entry, the teacher smiles and gives a friendly look (57.00 per cent), which is followed by ‘moves toward blackboard / OHP (30.00 per cent) and ‘greet students verbally’ (13.00 per cent) (Table 1). As regards the manner of beginning the class by the teacher, majority of the students reported that ‘they starts showing transparency’ (64.00 per cent) followed by ‘write topic / tittle on black board’ (12.00 per cent), ‘review last lecture’ (10.00 per cent), ‘ask questions to recall the lecture’ and ‘shares purpose of class’ (7.00 per cent each). As far as teachers’ manner of specifying the objectives of the days’ lesson was concerned, majority of students reported that the ‘teachers tell the main points of the lesson’ (75.00 per cent) followed by ‘writing purpose of the lesson on the black board’ (14.00 per cent) and ‘make an overview of the day’s lesson’ (11.00 per cent).

Table 1. Entry behaviors of the teachers N =100

S. No.	Entry behaviors of the teachers	Number of students
A.	Activity soon after entry	
	Smile and give a friendly look	57
	Move toward black board/OHP	30
B.	Manner of beginning the class	
	Greet students verbally	13
	Start showing transparency	64
	Write topic / tittle on black board	12
	Review last lecture	10
	Ask questions to recall the lecture	7
C.	Manner of specifying objectives	
	Share purpose of class	7
	Teachers tell the main points of the lesson.	75
	Write purpose of the lesson on the black board.	14
D.	Techniques of attracting attention	
	Make an overview of the day’s lesson.	11
	Teachers share personal experience to create interest	70
	Ask general questions	21
	Teachers do not use any specific technique to attract attention.	9

About techniques to attract the attention of students towards the topic of the day, majority of the students reported that ‘teachers share personal experience to create interest’ (70.00 per cent). Thus, all the techniques mentioned above were almost equally and less practiced.

It is clear from the findings that ‘Entry behaviour’ of the teachers has many gaps like a very small section of the sampled student respondents have viewed that teachers greet students verbally, review last lecture or shares purpose of the class and give preview of lesson.

Teachers’ verbal and non-verbal communications in the beginning do attract students and create motivating atmosphere.

Content Competence :

Content organisation–Proper designing of contents is necessary to ensure students’ sustained interest and learning. Content is to be made relevant for the learners. All the students reported that ‘teachers followed course outline closely’ and majority of the students’ view was that ‘teachers made judicious use of time’ (83.00 per cent). However, only 30.00 per cent students opined that ‘teachers used a well planned design of instruction’ followed by ‘keep changing approaches of teaching (28.00 per cent) and ‘divide each lesson into clearly distinguishable parts’ (25.00 per cent).

Content presentation–Effective use of language, confident and a lively manner of presentation of the subject matter holds the interest of the students. The teacher must aim to increase understanding of a given content area by personally involving the individuals through effective verbal and non-verbal techniques of class presentation. Students’ opinion regarding teachers’ presentation were studied in terms of ‘use of example’, ‘use of black board’, ‘use of explanation’, ‘use of summary’, ‘movement of teacher in the class room,’ ‘pace of speaking’ and ‘language used by the teachers’.

Use of examples–Majority of students (67.00 per cent) indicated that the examples used by teachers were relevant and well designed. Twenty per cent of the respondents reported that the teachers did not use many examples. Rest of the students (13.00 per cent) reported that the examples used by the teachers were often not clear.

Use of black board–Majority of students (71.00 per cent) reported that the teachers did not use black board too much. Among rest of the students, 17.00 per cent reported that the black -board was crowded and miscomprehended. Only 12.00 per cent of the students asserted that there was planned and legible use of black board by the teachers. This may be attributed to the reason that OHP was very oftenly used by the teachers and it might decrease the use of black board.

Language used by the teacher–Majority of students responded that the teachers ‘talk in a clear and audible tone’ (36.00 per cent), followed by ‘very coherent in conveying ideas to the students’ (30.00 per cent) and ‘they used chaste language with good pronunciation’ (20.00 per cent). However 14.00 per cent students reported that ‘their pronunciation was not good’.

Teachers’ responses to students’ answer–Most of the students reported that the ‘teachers praised correct/ partially correct answers’ (52.00 per cent) followed by

‘accepting whatever answer came’ (32.00 per cent). Some of the students (10.00 per cent) also reported that ‘teachers generally found faults with students responses.’ However, 6.00 per cent student stated that ‘teacher ignored whatever the answer came.’

Teachers’ strategy to use students’ participation: Majority of students (55.00 per cent) reported that teachers did not encourage students’ participation in discussion while 45.00 per cent students indicated that the teachers used ‘performing an experiment by the students.’

Closing behaviour—Closing lecture by giving the summary of major points presented during the lesson help the audience in comprehending the broader conceptualization of the topic. Majority of students reported that teachers abruptly ended the class when time was over (58.00 per cent) followed by ‘giving some assignments for the next lecture’ (25.00 per cent). Only 13.00 per cent students indicated that teachers made review of the class by themselves (Table 2).

About teachers’ attempt to link the summary of the lesson at the end with the goal of the lesson most of the students (75.00 per cent) reported that the teachers did not make such activity while only 25.00 per cent students indicated that teachers did it sometime. As regards reference given by the teachers to the students for further reading, majority of students (65.00 per cent) reported positively to this statement. They also indicated that at

the end of the class, teachers announced the topic of the next class (55.00 per cent).

Table 2. Closing behavior of the teachers N=100

S. No.	Closing behavior of teachers	Number of students
1.	Abruptly ends the class when time is over	58
2.	Gives some assignments for the next lecture	25
3.	Teachers make review of the class	13
4.	Teachers do not link the summary of the lesson at the end with the goal of the lesson	75
5.	Sometimes teachers attempt to link the summary of the lesson at the end with the goal of the lesson	25
6.	Teachers announced the topic of the next class	55
7.	Mention reference books for further studies	65

CONCLUSION :

The study on instructional skills of teachers revealed that teachers used to perform some of the skills appropriately but they were found lacking in manner of beginning/starting the class, manner of specifying objectives, use of black board, movement in the classroom, variation in pitch, encouraging students to ask questions, encouraging students’ participation in discussion and making review of the class. The findings of Tripathi (1995) in a study on speech communication behaviour in educational transaction and Kumar (1998) revealed some of the lacking which are found in the present study. It is therefore needed to train the teachers on various instructional skills.

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