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A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF TEACHING COMPETENCIES AND ITS IMPACT ON CREATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE TO HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

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Abstract

Economic, technical, and demographic trends are forcing an unprecedented restructuring of the Indian higher education system. It has made it possible for students of all levels to have widespread access to low-cost, high-quality university education through thoughtful growth and instruction-driven, student-centric methodology. Despite major advancements, teaching, and learning are still hampered higher education in India. Poor teaching, outmoded and restrictive curricula and methodology, lack of accountability and quality assurance, and the separation of research and teaching are its defining characteristics. The competency-based approach is one of the more recent and well-appreciated methods used by teachers in higher education to examine the qualitative and intangible components of human performance. Finding the skills that teachers need to do their jobs effectively in all facets of organisational activity is what competency teaching entails. As a result, the current study focuses on the professional competencies needed by teachers in higher education and creates a model for teaching competencies that gives higher education institutions a competitive advantage.

Key words: Teaching competencies, Competitive advantage, Knowledge competency, Pedagogical innovations, Student engagement competency, Technological competency.

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Introduction

Competency-based system produces performance-based learning outcomes for teachers which results in improved student performance as well as positive behavioral changes in both teachers and students. Teaching competency is recognised as a tool used by colleges and universities to develop knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviour, and attitude that are essential to performing real life work roles and tasks. The limitations of the traditional educational system, which lacks clear objectives or has them defined insufficiently, are where competency-based education fills the gap. Whereas, in a competency-based approach, teachers are taught clearly specified objectives on the competencies needed and the performance evaluation criteria. Additionally, competency- based learning places a stronger emphasis on exit requirements, whereas traditional education significantly emphasises program entrance requirements. In order to close the gap between theoretical academic material and actual industry/job requirements, competency-based programs were developed.

Competency-based teaching and resources are increasingly being used in a variety of educational contexts to fill this gap in the current educational system. Since a teacher is the most valuable educational resource, professional competence of a teacher—defined as "the ability of human to give quality professional service tailored to maximise probability of intended learning"—is now acknowledged as a crucial component of teaching.

Literature review

Three characteristics—knowledge, competence, and attitudes—are grouped together as teaching competencies. In describing the three elements, Medley & Crook (2011) stated that knowledge might refer to pedagogical knowledge, subject-area knowledge, or any other knowledge that could improve a teacher's performance. Content, writing, lecturing performance, knowledge and skill deployment planning, and the use of sophisticated tactics are all examples of skills. Attitudes can be about oneself, one's peers, one's career, one's values, or one's students. Thus, weexamine the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes (or the three components) of the professional competencies of educators and teachers connected to higher education.

As per Cronin and Davenport(2015), HEIs have been viewed as a reservoir of knowledge creation and thrive on the culture of knowledge sharing. A growing body of research supports the idea that knowledge management practices should be applied in HEIs to support their functional and operational processes (Kidwell et al., 2016), to provide a solid knowledge base for research- based practices and strategies (Cronin and Davenport, 2015), and to empower the institutions to use information in innovative ways so that undeveloped insights and knowledge can develop (Lawson, 2013).

The role of teachers in students' development has also become more cogent and elaborated; it was discovered after sifting through the literature on teachers' role-oriented skills that is currently available. This is because higher education dynamics have changed due to a complex business environment (Berdrow & Evers, 2014).

Gfroerer, (2013) viewed that the purpose of faculty members is to prepare students for successful application of knowledge and presentation of skills learned in real-world circumstances. This preparation goes beyond curriculum planning and knowledge transmission. This calls for instructors to make consistent efforts and use their expertise to support students' personal development, which aims to prepare them to handle challenging

situations.

The importance of teachers' interpersonal skills, particularly their capacity for motivating, has long been acknowledged in the literature (Hill & Houghton, 2011); (Berdrow & Evers, 2011). According to earlier studies, instructors' motivation is essential for fostering student involvement in learning processes, creating a learner-centric atmosphere, and for effective classroom management (Berdrow & Evers, 2013). (Crews and Bodenhamer,2016). In order to motivate students, teachers must be able to reward good behaviour and accomplishments (Hill & Houghton, 2012); encourage student involvement in their own learning (by exercising control over classroom learning activities) (Stuyven, Dochy, & Janssens, 2010); and provide engaging, challenging, and stimulating learning opportunities (Okrasinki, 2014).

Williams' (2012) qualitative study examined the key competencies required to be mastered by teachers for student involvement. Engagement competencies includes supportive classroom climate, positive interactions and effective student learning practices, and also the ability to show concern, empathy, and respect, be a people person, the capacity to mentor and be mentored, the capacity to learn, and to strive to learn continuously, and the capacity to recognise one's limitations and seek assistance.

Methodology

Research Objectives:

1) To study the types of teaching competencies required for competitive advantage in HEIs

2) To develop integrated model for teaching competencies

Hypotheses:

1. There is a significant positive correlation between professional learning, constructive partnership, motivational incentives for knowledge sharing among themselves and with knowledge competency
2. There is a substantial positive correlation between diversity in teaching methods, academic content, learning environment among themselves and with pedagogical innovations
3. There is a noteworthy positive correlation between supportive classroom climate, positive interactions, effective students learning practices among themselves and with student engagement competency
4. There is a significant positive correlation between IT based knowledge management processes; integration of e-learning into classroom instruction, data based management among themselves and with technological competency.
5. There is a significant correlation between teaching competencies and competitive advantage of HEIs.

Data Collection

Data from both primary and secondary sources was gathered in order to meet the study's aims. A questionnaire that was semi-structured was used to gather the primary data. The study has derived the questionnaire's variables based on the literature review. The researcher created products based on those variables, which were then submitted for professional opinion. The study was further piloted for the completion of the questionnaire following input from the experts.

The secondary data was gathered by examining and analysing many articles

from relevant colleges, universities, educational organisations, college reports, and projects on various websites.

Sampling

In order to achieve the study's goals, 125 faculty members from UGC-approved colleges and AICTE-approved institutions in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai were chosen using a sampling methodology known as the multistage stratified procedure. A list of institutions offering professional and technical education was first compiled using the UGC and AICTE directories. The second stage involved compiling a limited list of educational institutions with more than ten years of operating history. Only institutions that have at least 20 faculty members for each course in a professional or technical subject were further chosen for the investigation at the third stage. In the fourth step, faculty members from the educational institutions were chosen at random; out of 125 faculty members, 113 successfully completed the questionnaire.

Demographic profile of respondents under study

Age		Gender		Education		Designation	
25-34	52.21	Male	48.67	PG	72.56	Asst. Professor	52.22
35-44	33.63	Female	51.33	Ph.D	27.44	Assoc. Professor	28.32
> 44	14.16					Professor	19.46

Note: *All figures are in percentage*

Analysis and result discussion

Table 1 : Correlation among knowledge competency variables

	Professional Learning	Constructive Partnerships	Motivational incentives for knowledge sharing	Knowledge competency
Professional Learning		0.611	0.592	0.709
Constructive Partnerships	0.611		0.628	0.724
Motivational incentives for sharing knowledge	0.592	0.628		0.801

The above analysis highlighted that there is a positive correlation between *Professional learning*, Constructive *partnership* and *Motivational incentives for knowledge sharing* with values 0.709, 0.714 and 0.801 respectively; it depicts that *motivational incentives for knowledge sharing* contributes relatively more in building knowledge competency. Further, it is also clear that there is a significant positive correlation among these three variables and with knowledge competency which strongly indicates their role in building knowledge competency of teachers in higher educational institutes.

Table 2 : Correlation among pedagogical innovations variables				
	Diversity in teachingmethods	Academic content	learning environment	Pedagogical innovations
Diversity in teaching methods		0.627	0.744	0.781
Academic content	0.627		0.714	0.699
learning environment	0.744	0.714		0.718

As shown in the above table Pedagogical innovations has significant positive relations with variables *Diversity in teaching*, *Academic content* and *Learning environment* with 0.781, 0.699 and 0.718 values, where the *Diversity in teaching methods* has highest value followed by *Learning environment* and *Academic content*. It is also observed from the table that three variable are positively correlated with each other and with pedagogical innovations significantly.

Table 3 : Correlation among student engagement competency variables				
	Supportive classroom climate	Positive interactions	Effective students learning practices	Student engagement
Supportive classroom climate		0.790	0.673	0.684
Positive interactions	0.790		0.721	0.597
Effective student learning practices	0.673	0.721		0.755

As per the above analysis there is a strong positive correlation between *Supportive classroom climate*, Positive *interactions*, and Effective *student learning practices* with Student engagement competency with values 0.684, 0.597 and 0.755 respectively, it depicts that *Effective student learning practices* contribute highly in building student engagement competency factor. Further it is also clear that there is a significant positive correlation among these three variables and with student engagement competency which strongly indicates their role in building this competency among HEI teachers.

Table 4 : Correlation among technological competency variables				
	IT-based knowledge management processes	integration of e-learning into classroom instruction	Data base management	technological competency
IT based KM processes		0.677	0.735	0.749

integration of e-learning into classroom instruction	0.677		0.688	0.753
Data base management	0.735	0.688		0.679

As per the data analysis shown in the above table technological competency has significant positive relations with variables IT based knowledge management processes, integration of e- learning into classroom instruction and Data base management with 0.749, 0.753 and 0.679 values, where the integration of e-learning into classroom instruction has highest value followed by IT based knowledge management processes and Data base management. It is also observed from the table that three variable are positively correlated with each other and with technological competence significantly.

Table 5 : Correlation between teaching competencies and Competitive advantage

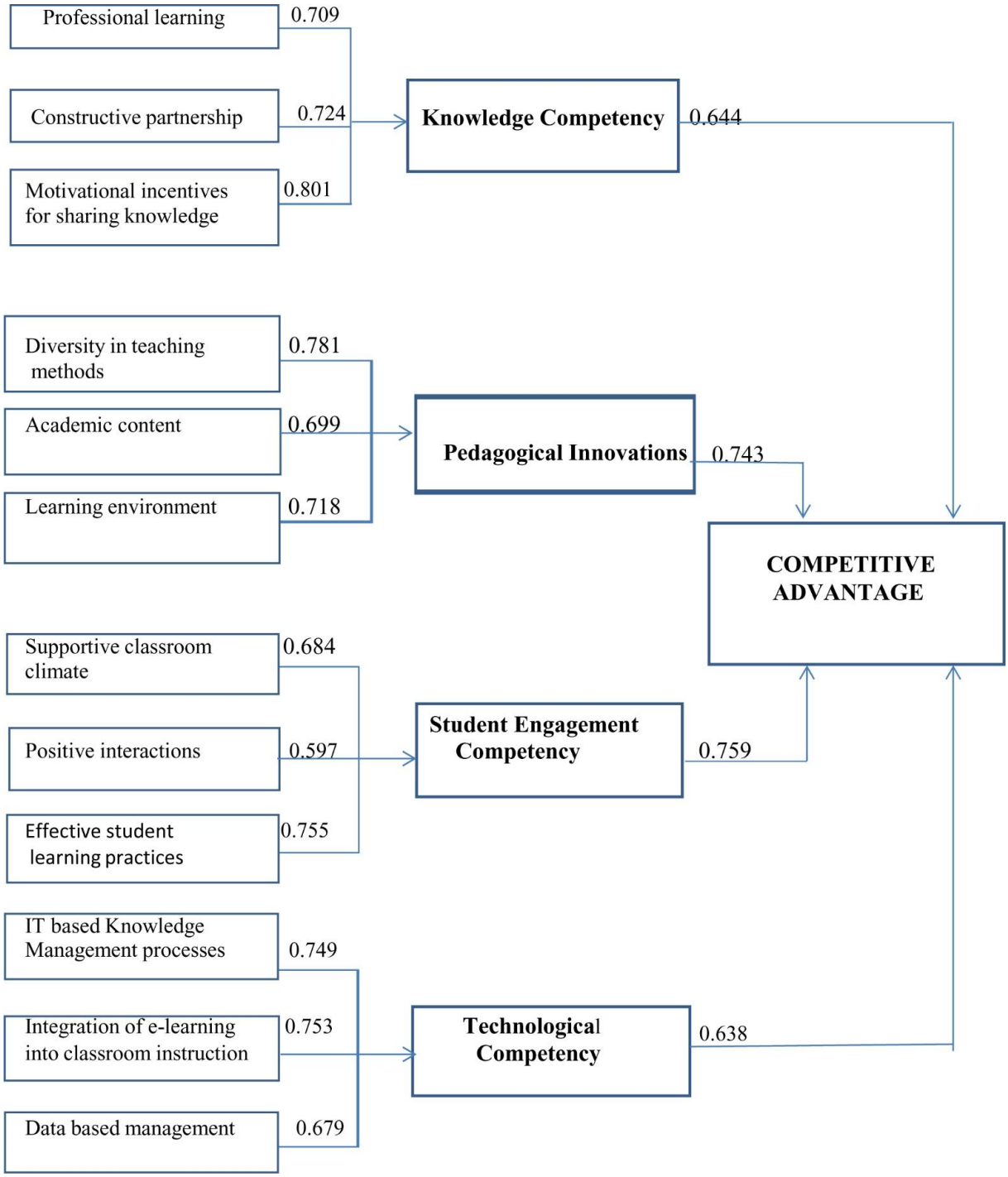
	knowledge competency	Pedagogical innovations	student engagement	technological competency	Competitive advantage
knowledge competency		0.698	0.752	0.766	0.644
Pedagogical innovations	0.698		0.801	0.750	0.743
student engagement	0.752	0.801		0.687	0.759
Technological competency	0.766	0.750	0.687		0.638

The detailed analysis carried out with reference to the data collected enabled to test broad hypothesis 'teaching competencies lead to competitive advantage in Higher educational institutes'. The entire data is statistically analysed for all four competencies and its relationship with competitive advantage, as shown in the above table all four competencies-knowledge competency, Pedagogical innovations, Student engagement and Technological competency are having significant positive relationship with competitive advantage.

The Integrated Model for Teaching Competencies and Competitive advantage in Higher Education

The model shows how improved competences result in educational outcomes like higher levels of student engagement, innovative learning environments for students, and increased competitive advantage for HEIs. The approach presents the created competencies in terms of technical competency, student involvement, pedagogical innovations, and knowledge competency. Based on the analysis, a degree of association between teaching abilities and competitive advantage has been established in the study, which used primary and secondary sources to gather information. Additionally, correlations were calculated for all the variables influencing various skills.

The Integrated Model for Teaching Competencies and Competitive advantage in Higher Education



It has been established through the model that 'professional learning' (0.709), 'constructive partnership' (0.714) and 'motivational incentives for sharing knowledge' (0.801) lead to knowledge competence. The pedagogical innovation factors identified are 'diversity in teaching methods' (0.781), 'academic content' (0.699), and 'learning environment' (0.718). Similarly, the factors leading to student engagement are 'supportive classroom climate' (0.684), 'positive interactions' (0.597), and 'effective students learning practices' (0.755). Another teaching competency is technological competence, the factors

attributed to this are factors are 'IT based knowledge management process' (0.749), 'integrated e-learning into classroom instruction' (0.753) and 'data base management' (0.679).

The model finally established the teaching competencies that contribute to the long term competitive advantage and sustainability of HEIs, the correlation of these factors with competitive advantage are knowledge competency (0.644), pedagogical innovations (0.743), students engagement competency (0.759), and technological competency (0.638).

Conclusion

The available literature and the current study concur that there is a lack of adequate training and awareness among teachers regarding the goals of competency-based systems, competency-based assessment tools, and competency-based evaluation techniques, as well as poor competency- based program implementation in the institutions, which causes resistance from faculty members who see it as a waste of their time and effort spent on teaching. The successful implementation of personality development programs, capacity enhancement schemes, management development programs, and other similar joint initiatives by HEI management, teachers, and corporate officials is essential for developing the professional competencies of teachers. This will help bridge the gap between academic institutions' theoretical curricula and real-world business needs. In a nut shell, teaching competences, as mentioned in the model with its potential for adaptability, openness, and personalization, can result in a breakthrough in removing obstacles and enhancing the success of higher education for all parties involved that leads to competitive advantage for all higher educational institutes.

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