Technophobia among Teachers

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Technophobia is not a shameful thing. It is not a disease and certainly not a reflection on the intellectual capacity of the individual. Hence, it is to remove blame and shame from any discussion on Technophobia share with individual that this is a problem that affects many individuals from Educational Planners to Policy makers, teachers, parents and students. The subject Phobia has been extensively covered in the psychological literature of Freud.

Technophobia means – abnormal fear of or anxiety about effects of advanced technology or fear of the effects of technological developments on society or the environment.

It is the fear of modern technology or opposite of Technophilia. Most real examples of Technophobia are far from sedate, from fear of learning to use a computer or to choosing to withdraw cash from human bank i.e. cashier than to operate hole in the wall i.e. ATM.

A study conducted on ‘Technophobia among primary school Teachers in Nigeria.’ (Akinyemi, 1986), was designed to investigated the causes of Teacher’s apathy towards equipment and to verify possible links with Technophobia. Results have yielded that primary school teachers demonstrated lack of knowledge of educational technology and were traces of Technophobia among teachers. Study on Computer Availability, Computer Experience and Technophobia among Public School Teachers (Rosen, 1995), concluded that although teachers have uncleared computer availability in their classrooms, they are not integrating computers into standard curricula. A sample of Elementary teachers (N=171), secondary school teachers (N=117) and secondary humanities teachers (N=200) in 54 schools across five urban schools districts was taken and results indicated that no doubt Computers are available at all schools, but are not being used by teachers, Many teachers are Technophobic, particularly elementary teachers and secondary humanities teachers and Teachers are most worried about dealing with actual computer
machinery in their classroom, about computer errors and about learning to use computers. ‘Technophobia of Higher Secondary School Teachers’ (Selvaganapathi & Viayapuri Raja, 2012) conducted on 300 teachers working in the higher secondary school situated in the Kumbakonam Taluk, Thanjavur District of Tamilnadu revealed that majority of teachers are relatively a low level of Technophobic.

Above discussion revealed that there is need to study causes and strategies to remove technophobia. Technophobic teachers show some specific behaviors which are as

- Reluctance to use computers and related technologies.
- Resistance to automatic processes.
- Unwillingness to change from one system to another or one software to another.
- Highly critical of any technology changes or implementation.
- Passive resistance to new technology initiatives.
- Unwillingness to attend training classes.
- Slow to learn new technologies.
- Pleading the old way is the best way.
- Providing excuses for not attending training sessions.

Technophobia may refer to two different types of conditions: fear of technology or antagonism towards technological developments. In the first case, Technophobia can cause anxiety and discomfort when a sufferer comes into contact with technology such as computers. The second type of Technophobia may harbor feeling of hostility towards the changes that technology has introduced into society. The opposite ‘The love of technology’ as referred to as Technophilia. The type of Technophobia that causes people to feel discomfort with technology is a fairly recent development, stemming from the exponential advances made in the field since the late 20 century. Moreover, since technology has affected nearly all aspects of life from work environments to education to leisure activities, these Technophobes generally have a hard time getting away from it. As a result, their general quality of life can be negatively affected. For example, a general fear of technology can create anxiety and frustration in those people who have duties that require them to interest with technology but they feel uncomfortable using it. Technophobia includes 11 symptoms listed below

- Feeling of panic
Feeling of terror
Feeling of dread
Rapid heartbeat
Shortness of breath
Nausea
Dry mouth
Trembling
Anxiety

Strategies to address technophobia

i. Let the teachers know that all of us struggle to keep up with technology. It is only the degree of struggle that is different.

ii. Provide meaningful and sustained support to help individuals identify and overcome their phobia.

iii. Create a friendly, non-threatening learning environment to make teachers more comfortable with teaching.

iv. Develop the positive attitude towards Technology

v. Guide them ‘Practice makes man Perfect’ and More you fail, More you learn.

vi. Teachers can learn from students because that learning is a neat thing and students will be proud of themselves because they may know something that teacher did not know.

vii. Teachers should be open minded because always there’s good and there’s bad and we just have to wade through and figure out how we can best fit into situation.

To conclude, our classroom is now global classroom and to meet the need of students, our teachers should be well informed about new Technologies and their use. It is possible only if authorities help them to rectify the Technophobia among teachers by organizing workshops, and seminars during pre-service and in-service programme and teachers themselves have faith in Technology.
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