

THE INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES: AN ANALYSIS TO DISTANCE EDUCATION BRINGS HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS WITH ACADEMIC INTEGRATION

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Abstract

ABSTRACT-*The In-service Teacher Education strengthens continuous professional development of teachers, which includes the content of the program, need of classroom, school and society. This study focused on the planning of In-service Teacher Education programs or activities. For this case study, the researcher took 8 In-service Teacher Education programs of RIE, BBSR in the session 2016-17 as purposive sampling and collected data through observation, interview schedules and questionnaires, the data were analyzed in both qualitatively and quantitatively. The major finding of the study was as like that the interest and punctuality of the participants are much more important for the achievement of the objectives of the programs, which makes the classroom teaching-learning effective with improvement in students' Academic performance. Effective learning through distance mode is characterized by flexibility in learning provision, openness to access various learning resources, autonomy of the learners where there is scope for maintaining honesty, self regulation, discipline and quality of learning environment which leads to Academic integrity. And this study suggested for the evaluation of these programs need to be undertaken for maintaining the standards in Teachers' quality.*

Key words- *continuous professional development, interest, effective, Academic integration.*

Introduction:

Teacher's professional development includes not only pre-service and in-service teacher education, but also constant support to the teacher and an enabling environment that encourages and motivates her or him. The professional development of teachers has to be in multidimensional space with monitoring and assessment of progress to ensure capacity building. A comprehensive framework for the professional development of a teacher would include the content of the program, need of classroom, school and society. This would require a large canvas that covers all, enhancing subject or discipline knowledge, in particular its conceptual understanding and appreciation of the nature of the discipline. Education system therefore seeks to provide teachers with opportunities for in-service professional development in order to maintain a high standard of teaching and to retain a high quality teacher workforce. Effective professional development is on-going; includes training, practice and feedback and also provides adequate time and follow up support. Successful programs involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students and encourage the development of teachers' learning communities. There is growing interest in developing schools as learning organizations and in ways for teachers to share their expertise and experience more systematically. Professional development implies striving continuously to enrich one's professional

knowledge and upgrade one's skills throughout his or her life. Professionals generally undergo continuing professional development through self-study, participation in seminars, workshops, conferences etc; preparation of papers on the basis of one's own observations, experiences and experiments; participating in meetings of study circles or professional groups; and participation in refresher or orientation courses formally organized by the employers or the professional organizations of teachers and teacher educators, and also Distance mode of Education creates a big platform for In-service Teachers to develop as physically, mentally and socially lead to Academic integration with self regulation of Teachers. Their interest and motivation are also one of the most requirements for achieving the objectives of the programmes.

Research Questions

1. How does the institution plan for in-service teacher preparation programmes?
2. What are the modalities applied in the in-service programs to cater to needs of participants?
3. What are the evaluation strategies applied for in-service teacher training programmes?

Objectives of the study

1. To study the planning of In-service Teacher Education programmes or activities.
2. To identify the followed multiple modalities catering to the needs of participants with different learning styles.
3. To find out the evaluation practices followed in the In-service Teacher education programmes.

Scope of The Study

This research focused on the planning and execution of In-service Teacher education programmes. Also it identified to what extent the objectives of programmes are achieved in present context.

Delimitation of the study

The research is delimited to Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar and further delimited to in-service teacher training programme of 2016-17 session only.

Method of the study

The present study is a case study. For the first objective, Interview schedules for the programme coordinators were developed by the researcher. For the second objective, Observation schedules have been taken for identifying multiple modalities catering to the needs of participants with different learning styles. And for the last objective, the researcher did the interviews of the programme coordinators. Questionnaires were also used for the strengthening of this study. The data obtained through interview schedules and observation schedules was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively and interpreted through tables, percentages, pie charts and bar diagrams also. The data obtained through questionnaires for the participants was analyzed qualitatively.

Major findings and discussion

- In-service Teacher education programmes were organized on various themes relevant to their functioning. Most of the Departments organized the programmes related to their respective fields.
- Most of the participants (92 percent) for the training programme were deputed from their respective organizations. The deputation was made on the basis of the request made by the respective coordinators to the heads of the organizations like KVS, NVS etc and state offices like SCERTs, SIEs, Directorate of Education etc.
- It is found that most of the Development and Training programmes are organized because of the State requirements. The state requirement programme is 87.5% and a few programmes i.e. 12.5% are included in others. Others category includes training programme for Navodaya Vidyalayas requirements. In many cases, teachers may not be able to invest much financial resources personally for their professional growth. So there is a need of professional organizations of teachers which are functioning as trade unions with their primary focus on securing better service conditions for teachers. Regional Institute of Education conducts so many programs in own interest of participants which facilitating the realization of the envisioned goals of Education.
- It is seen that maximum number of programmes were conducted for the state of Bihar, to know that maximum Development and Training programmes are conducted for bringing quality in Secondary Education and very few for Elementary level. Most of programmes are done for the fulfillment of the State requirements.
- In the Department of Education, there were 3 training programmes, conducted likewise Training of key resource persons of Bihar on School readiness, Development of training package on computer aided learning for computer teachers at Secondary level, Capacity building program on Enriching Pedagogical Content Knowledge of Science teachers of Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe dominated areas of Jharkhand. In the Department of Education in Social Science and Humanities, there were also 3 training programmes like Capacity building programme in Bengali for PGTs Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Content enrichment- programme in English for PGTs of Navodaya Vidyalayas, and Effective Pedagogical strategies in teaching English language at Secondary level for teachers of Scheduled Caste (SC) dominated of Bihar. But last one is still not completed. In the Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, there were one training programme and one about development. These were; Capacity building programme for Master Trainer of Scheduled Caste dominated areas in Biology at Higher Secondary stage for Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Workshop for overcoming the discrepancies in Mathematics Curriculum at the Secondary stage.
- The objectives of the programmes are basically similar like – to enrich the pedagogical content knowledge, To orient and design the training schedule and materials, to identify the hard spots or training needs, to empower the key resource persons on various aspects of School readiness.

- Maximum programmes were for 5 days duration. Activities which were done during the development of the programmes likewise, Training, Development of module/material and training etc. And the methodologies of the programmes were done by Training, Need analysis and Planning the modalities. Evaluation of the conducting programmes were through Pre-test and Post-test, feedback, reflection of participants etc.
- The In-service Teacher education programmes have catered to the needs of varied categories of participants. These are teachers, Headmasters, teacher educators, and Key/Resource Persons. The beneficiaries of the above programmes are Teachers, Headmasters, Teacher educators, State Boards, Key resource persons and students also. As the maximum programmes are state requirements, so State Board of Education will be getting maximum benefits. And in-service programmes are for bringing quality in teaching-learning process, so student's learning will be enhanced.
- Resource persons were engaged in the various training programmes on the basis of their expertise in the respective field/areas. They are also selected from those who were trained as master trainers in the earlier training programmes. Their expertise, experiences enriched the training. They were also associated with writing of modules/chapters for the training package/ materials.
- Variation was found on participants were invited and attended one Department to another. Maximum participants were invited (65.50%) and attended (53.50%) the in-service programmes in the Department of Science and Mathematics and less numbers of participants were invited (35.33%) and attended (19.66%) in the Department of Education.
- Development and use of Training Materials can be considered as an important aspect for ensuring comprehensiveness and success of the programme. The process of its development and the involvement of various stakeholders in the development are also very crucial. In the In-service Teacher education programmes, the co-ordinators distributed materials of the programme, handouts, audio and video CD's etc.
- The strategies were used by the resource persons during the programmes like Lecture method (PPT), probing questions to participants, practical laboratory work, group work, discussion, reflection session, lesson plan preparation, field visit.
- The researcher found that verbal interaction was done for evaluate the in-service programmes of all the Departments. Online mode of evaluation was only done in the training programme like Development of Training package on Computer aided learning for computer teachers at Secondary level of the Department of Education. Open written feedback was also very acceptable method of evaluation. And in the Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, there was no used of evaluation schedule. The needs for the programme are adequately assessed, pre and post tests were administered to examine the effectiveness of training programme.
- The researcher observed only four In-service Teacher education programmes and found that some participants did not show interest towards innovative practices about teaching learning

process. They just attended the programmes. As medium of instruction was English, some were facing difficulties in understanding the concepts. So resource persons were requested to translate the concepts in to Hindi language. But some participants were very curious to know about effective transaction of teaching- learning process.

- Time management for transaction of the module or topic was not properly done in some programmes.

Discussion:

Inter departmental and inter institutional planning for the training programmes need to be done for formulating interdisciplinary programmes.

The duration of a large number of NCERT programmes varies between 3 to 5 days. Larger duration programmes are relatively less in number and are conducted by a few constituent units. Probably short duration programmes are convenient to both organisers and participants. Also, as these are in-service training activities, it sometimes becomes difficult for the States to depute their functionaries for a longer period. However, in order to develop an in-depth understanding on a particular issue, offering of long duration programmes through distance/ online modes needs consideration.

The NCERT gave enough attention to conduct meeting with the resource persons prior to the programmes to inform the resource persons regarding the need and importance of the programmes, objectives of the programme, mode of transaction to be used during the programmes, etc. These meetings contributed in the successful completion of the programmes.

Participation of Trainees -Steps are needed to ensure that nearly 100 percent trainees attend the training programme. This will help in organising training programmes cost effectively. Regularity and punctuality in attendance of the participants during the training need to be ensured. The resource persons need to be aware about the training techniques, content and technology

Sharing of Training Report -Report of each training programme should be developed and shared with States/UTs for taking necessary action. Reports can be shared through NCERT website also. Feedback from the participants should be taken confidentially and utilized for improving future training programmes

Feedback and follow up- Feedback and follow up should be an integral part of the training programmes. An Institutional mechanism needs to be developed for follow-up of programmes. Clear follow up plans and modality of utilising of the training inputs by the participants need to be in-built in the programme proposal.

Time or Duration- In most of the in-service training programmes conducted by the NCERT, feedback has been received about increasing time duration of the programme as different participants may require different levels of individual attention to answer their doubts, and also for learning (both content and innovative pedagogical methods). It is thus important that Departments may plan in-service training programmes of longer duration on specific areas where this expertise are available.

Training Materials and Packages- Training materials/modules to be developed before the conduct of the training programme based on the needs. The materials are need to be designed in such a way that there is minimum transaction loss and at the same time create space for accommodating further needs and contexts of the trainees. Materials should also have inbuilt content related to gender, special needs, adolescence concerns guidance and counselling and other emerging concerns with a focus on life skills application. Training materials should also be available as e-learning materials.

Infrastructure and learning resources- For proper maintenance of training labs and training halls, adequate number of computer systems should be available.

Administrative and Related to Travel and Dearness Allowances- Programme coordinator's involvement should not be involved in the disbursement of TA/DA of trainees. It is observed that TA/DA issue creates disturbance during the programmes. The persons from Account section, as has been the practice in the past, should be deputed to settle TA/DA of the participants. In many cases, after the programme, programme coordinators have to face objections from the Accounts Section. However, participants incur expenditure on their food, and in some cases lodging, in the return journey for which bill cannot be produced in advance, and, hence, remain unreimbursed fully.

Academic Integrity incorporates with holistic development through Distance mode

Integration is the act of bringing together smaller components in to a single system that functions as one. Developing oneself as a resourceful skilled person, continuous updating of knowledge is required. The mode of Distance Education gives individuals flexibility in their choices of continuing courses of Education for which this mode of learning is user friendly with develop values lead to maintaining honesty, self regulation discipline which are directly related to integrity in academic field. This also provides opportunities to each individual to apply theoretical knowledge in practical manner simultaneously in the field sector which brings skilled manpower development with economic growth. Freedom in such learning increases autonomy of learner in paced set up. For the holistic development of learners, Academic integration in Distance Education is very much required such as developing in all aspects like physically, mentally and socially which brings desirable changes in every field of life. Activity based project enlarges the areas for inculcation of values among learners like collaboration who are involved in the field. When participants in a course help to establish a community of learning (Palloff and Pratt, 1999) by projecting their personal characteristics into the discussion, at that time our own social presence reflects like affective, interactive and cohesiveness. Affective means the expression of emotion, feelings and mood. Interactive leads to evidence of reading, attending, understanding, thinking about other's responses. Cohesive signifies that builds and sustain a sense of "belongingness", group commitment or common goals and objectives. And the cognitive aspect generalizes the extent to which the learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through discussion in a community of learning or inquiry. Cognitive presence can be demonstrated by introducing factual, conceptual and theoretical knowledge into the discussion. Life enrichment programmes not only make learners capable and efficient enough to tackle the problem, complexities and challenges prevailed in the life of post modern era but also accelerated his or her

manifestation of the inner potentialities. Though Distance Education needs quality in learning, there is also a positive relationship between integration with moral codes, creating a learning environment.

Educational Implications

This study result will provide some information to the curriculum planners, administrators, Teacher Education Institutions and experts in such fields with detailed understanding about the need for a variety of routes/mechanism for teachers to further their professional development. This study may help the teacher educators to know own roles and responsibilities to bring qualitative changes in Educational sector.

Suggestions For Further Study

The researcher has conducted study on Inservice Teacher Education programme of RIE, Bhubaneswar. Similar study can be conducted on the Inservice Teacher Education programme provided by other teacher education institution. The scope of the training programme should be vast.

Conclusion

In service Teacher education is the life line of the teacher's professional development to develop his/her teaching competencies? Challenges are always a part and parcel of a teacher's life as he/she has to handle individual differences and have to provide them with necessary skills and vocation, have to perform academic and non-academic duties, have to face new technological and other emerging problems. Therefore, the present study has an immense effect as it tries to bring out different aspects of teacher's training programme but it is very much important to evaluate the effect of training programme as the theory needs to be practiced in the real situation. Researches in this field will always be a reflection on what is prevailing in the system and will always be in demand to equip teacher educators with new and better strategy for the various training programmes.

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