



IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES- AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

As we all know that education is a never ending process that allows a person's mind to grow continuously. As a teacher, we should be able to provide the students conducive environment for better learning, as it has direct impact on students' learning. A teacher's role is very pivotal in shaping his students behavior, that's why he should never stop learning. Such things can only be achieved through continuous learning. In-service teacher education programmes provide opportunities to the in-service teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge in their respective fields. There are various platforms which are conducting in-service teacher education programmes in online and offline mode. The present paper discusses about the teacher education, in-service teacher education, its role and importance in higher education.

Keywords: Teacher Education, In-Service Teacher Education Programmes, Higher Education



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Introduction

Teachers and their education play an important role in a nation's building. Education is an indispensable part in shaping the future of nation and its citizens as well. Teacher education is closely associated with society, culture, constitution and character of its nation. The main objective of teacher education is to impart education to teacher trainees for achievement of desired academic outcomes. Teacher plays an important role in growth and development of their students. In order to perform all these duties their skills and abilities play a pivotal role. Besides academic achievements teachers have to promote social welfare as well. On the path of implementation in their activity duties, they are required to deal with many challenges.

To face such challenges a teacher should aim at continuous learning to keep his knowledge updated. Various educational councils and committees put forward the idea of in-service teacher education programmes at school and university level. In-service teacher education programmes help in enhancement of teaching methods, subject knowledge and introduces innovative educational ideas. In-service teacher education programmes were designed for the promotion of continuous professional development of the teachers, who are in job/working. Such programmes include all kind of activities and courses providing opportunities for extension in professional skills and knowledge.

Background of In-Service Teacher Education Programmes in India

Various aspects of Indian Higher Education system have always been criticized for its irrelevance, insignificance and inability to contribute in national development. National Educational Institutes like universities and colleges have been supported by the resources of the society. The teachers of these institutes are expected to keep their knowledge updated and avoid using old teaching methods in classrooms.

Indian Higher Education system has grown significantly after independence. This system is the third largest system in the world. This system is expected to provide the adequately skilled human resources, well equipped with the technical knowledge and skills to meet the needs of rapid growing economy. India is a country which has the largest young population in the world. Therefore, it is expected to deliver more gains in terms of growth and prosperity. Taking the advantage of this situation the central government of India is making more suitable policies that would make education more accessible for the youth in diverse fields. Higher education aims at the following areas for development:

- Expansion of higher education institutions
- Provision of value based education
- Quality and excellence
- Provision for equal access to education for all
- More flexible education system

The rapid progress of higher education has a considerable impact on the quality of education. One of the major concerns in higher education is 'Teacher Quality'. We all know that quality of education is mainly determined by the competencies, abilities and skills of teachers. In present time, a teacher has to play an active role in students' holistic development. It is not just about imparting the suitable knowledge, skills and methodologies, but it also

involves periodically updating the knowledge and skills of teachers. Imparting training to the teachers is relatively beneficial concept in higher education.

The dynamic concept of In - Service teacher education has a long history .The Indian teacher education system has faced various problems since independence. Various shortcomings and remedial measures had been put forward by the reports of various councils, commissions and committees. As a result of all this, teacher education focused towards the organization of development programmes. With the passage of time, its scope has also widened. Universities, various state level autonomous and government educational bodies have been formed for the development of In- Service Teacher education programmes at all levels.

Pre-Independence Background of In-Service Teacher Education Programmes in India

The concept of teacher education has been a matter of discussion even before independence in India. During British rule the progress of teacher education was slow and no significant efforts were made for its development. But eventually, teacher education started growing in India. Various educational committees, commissions, plan and schemes put forward their recommendations regarding both modes of teacher education i.e.Pre-Service or In-Service Teacher Education. Woods Despatch, HunterCommission, Sadler Commission, Abbot Wood Report, Basic Education Scheme& Sargent Plan put forward their suggestions regarding introduction and promotion of In-Service Teacher Education Programmes.

Post-Independence Background of In-Service Teacher Education Programmes In India

For qualitative improvements in higher education different commissions like Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission (1948), Kothari Commission (1966), Secondary Education Commission, NCERT(1961), National Educational Policy 1968, National Education Commission (1986), Programme of Action (POA 1992)etc.gave recommendations for a sustained and purposeful development of academic staff in higher education.

Apart from this, With the passage of time various online platforms have also been launched by Ministry of education to make it more feasible for the teachers to attend in-service teacher education programmes. MOOC, ARPIT and SWAYAM are a better example of online platforms providing in-service teacher education in higher education.

Academic Staff Colleges

It is believed that in pursuance of the National Policy on Education (NPE 1986) and Programme of Action (POA 1992) UGC took various steps for the inculcation of motivation in teachers and to raise the status of university and college teachers. NPE 1986 pointed out that teachers were not given adequate chances for their personal and professional growth. In order

to overcome all these deficiencies, it was proposed that specially designed orientation programmes and refresher courses should be organized as 'In - Service Teacher Training'. Academic Staff Orientation Scheme (ASOS), later known as Academic Staff College scheme was initiated by the University Grants Commissions in 1987 based on the recommendation of National Policy on Education. National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) suggested that the present education system did not provide enough opportunities for professional development of teachers and also it did not have provisions for career development, creativity and innovations. Programme of Action (1992) under the NPE 1986 mentioned a comprehensive programme for professional development through Academic Staff Colleges. As a result of it, in 1987 University Grants Commission sanctioned the setting up of forty eight Academic Staff Colleges. It started with the objective of enabling the academic staff to become effective facilitators for students' learning through effective management of the conditions that affect learning.

Human Resource Development Centre

In 2015 Academic Staff Colleges were renamed as Human Resource Development Centre. These centers have been working well in the university system through the financial support of University Grants Commissions. HRDCs organize various kinds of Faculty Development Programmes, which are as following:

Orientation Programmes

The word orientation simply suggests "to orient", which means introduction to a new situation. An orientation programme is always conducted at the beginning of a new educational session or new course. Orientation is important, as it lays a foundation for a new employee's entire career.

It increases an employee's confidence and helps him adapt faster to the job environment, which contributes to be a more effective and productive workforce in improving employee's retention power at workplace. The main goal of conducting an orientation programme is to transform a teacher into a creative teacher and continuous learner. But it is possible only when the Academic Staff Colleges indentify the relevant content and appropriate methodology for training of In- Service Teachers. University Grants Commission has provided detailed and broad guidelines regarding the themes to be covered under the orientation programmes. The newly appointed teachers can attend the orientation course /programme up to six years of continuous service. Even after six years of service, they have to attend the orientation

programme under the career advancement scheme. The duration of an orientation programme can be 18 to 21 days.

Refresher Course

Refresher course is considered to be second level programme after the orientation programme. It is a subject specific programme or inter-disciplinary programme for three weeks (Minimum 18 working days) duration. The major objective of organizing refresher courses is imparting new subject knowledge and teaching methods under the supervisions of experts of the concerned field.

Refresher courses provide In-Service Teacher Education very effectively along with some new dimensions. Such courses focus on updating the knowledge skills of the participants as per the latest educational trends in their concerned subjects. The experts and most renowned persons from the concerned fields are invited as resource persons to deliver the lecture. A refresher course is a training course in which people improve their knowledge/skills and learn about new developments that are related to the job that they do. Refresher courses are simply based on the assumption that the knowledge skills become obsolete with the passage of time due to the technological advancements and the human tendency of forgetting the things after sometime.

Short Term Courses

A short term course offers the programmes, which are conducted for a short duration of time. Such programmes are meant for enhancing the professional capacities of the participants. Short term courses are usually for 2 days to one week. Short term courses are organized for the Academic Administrator, Principals, and heads of the departments, research scholars and non- teaching staff.

Seminars

Seminars are considered to be a very comprehensive, popular and convenient way of getting solution of all problems of educational field. A seminar is a kind of gathering, in which a group of teachers, experts and students discuss about any particular topic or the theme in a particular discipline. It is usually an interactive session in which the participants indulge themselves in discussion about any delineated topic.

Symposium

Symposium is an activity that includes a degree of audience participation less than that of as form, thus implying a greater structure to the meeting format. It has an implied academic aspect that differentiates it from seminar. In symposium the participant is expected to have a

deeper knowledge and understanding of an issue. They may have heard entirely new concepts about an existing subject or have been introduced to something completely new. Symposium is generally considered similar to conference, but it has a small structure. Instead of discussing about more general things it focuses on a particular issue.

Workshop

Workshop is a kind of activity in which people engage in an intensive discussion and perform an activity on a particular subject or project. Generally, Workshops focus on practical aspects of any project or activity.

Conference

The word conference comes from the word 'CONFER', which means the exchange of ideas on a specific subject, often to reach a decision on what action to take. It is a big event that brings together the professionals of the education field. Conferences in education are organized with the purpose of discussing the curriculum development, intensifying the interdisciplinary programmes areas, for preparation and selection of appropriate teaching materials, raising awareness about human rights, knowledge of public functionaries and rendering acquaintances in research methodology.

MOOC

A massive open online course (MOOC) is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. MOOCs are a recent and widely researched development in distance education, first introduced in 2006 and emerged as a popular mode of learning in 2012.

In this changing paradigm, Teacher Professional Development cannot be equated to attend a few day workshop programs, on and off. Rather it will require continuous efforts and with easy accessibility, low cost and interactive nature, MOOCs provide immense learning opportunities to the teachers for professional development. Experts opine that the most natural and immediate service that MOOCs can provide to teachers is the professional development of the teachers. Though MOOCs are available for Teacher professional development, a large number of teachers are still unaware about MOOC and the opportunities for Teacher professional development.

SWAYAM & ARPIT

Using MOOCs platform on 8 May, 2018 AICTE, (a statutory body of Government of India) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development launched SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds), a unique and major initiative towards online

professional development courses for higher education faculty. In starting , 75 (Disciplines - Specific) National Resource Centers were identified and instructed to prepare material for online training on the basis of previous developments in the same discipline, pedagogical improvements and new emerging trends After the success of SWAYAM Ministry of Human Resource Development on 13 November, 2018, launched an another online platform named ARPIT for professional development courses. ARPIT stands for “Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching ”. ARPIT will be an ongoing exercise just like SWAYAM; NRCs (National Resource Centres) will develop new refresher modules in various disciplines every year.

Conclusion

To encapsulate, we can say that in- service teachers education play a pivotal role in professional growth of teachers. Through such programmes they get a chance to explore the new teaching methods, skills and enhance their subject knowledge. There is no other way of keeping yourself updated according to the fast changing ways of educational world.

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