

Perception of Stakeholders of Elementary Education about Quality of Learning Materials of In-service Training Programme

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Abstract

The quality of citizens of the country depends upon the quality of education. The quality of their education depends, more than any other single factor, upon the quality of their teachers. The teacher education programme is divided into pre-service and in-service teacher education. Both are important at their own place. In-service training plays a vital role in sharpening the philosophical, psychological and sociological ideologies with current innovative concepts. The RTE-SSA, being the flagship programme of Government of India, have been putting the best efforts to impart minimum 20 days in-service training to all the elementary school teachers on different subjects and themes. The state authorities have a major role to play in this regard. The stakeholders such as teachers, trainers, supervisory personnel perceive such programme in different angle. The researcher has made an attempt to study, the perception of teachers and trainers on the quality of learning material, training kit and other equipments available in the training centres. The data were collected through separate questionnaires and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The finding revealed that the learning materials, training packages are of good quality and there was provision of such material for both teachers and trainers. Only ICT equipments were not available in the training centres. The readers can get more clarity from the present paper.

Key words: Perception of Stakeholders, Elementary Education, Learning Materials In-Service Training Programme

Introduction

Education for capacity building of teachers occupies prime place in the system in the form of teacher education programme. The entire teacher education programme is divided into two segments; (i) Pre-service Education, (ii) In-service Education. Without pre-service teachers' training there is no base of teacher education and without in-service teachers' training there is no strength and dynamism of teacher education. The place of pre-service training is of

primary importance and it provides an insight into the profession including psychological, sociological and philosophical principles relating to education where as in-service education enables the teacher to reinforce his faith and making him up-to-date with the current developments in education. The pre-service education however rich in quality and quantity can never be a substitute for continuous in-service education, rather in-service education is much more necessary at present to keep pace with the age of science and technology and the modern dynamic society. In this context, the University Education Commissions, 1948-49, has emphasized the need for in-service education for teachers and made it clear that teacher education is not merely pre-service education provided in the teachers' training institutions but includes both pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Quality Dimensions of In-Service Training Programme

Preparation of teacher for the elementary education plays a vital role in universalizing the elementary education. For the said purpose there is pre-service and in-service training programme for elementary teachers. Under in-service training programme the major dimensions need to be followed to maintain the quality of the in-service training programme.

These dimensions are mentioned as follows;

- Management Of Programme
- Learning Materials/Training Package
- Resource Persons
- Approaches/ Methods Of Transactions
- Residential Facilities In The Centre
- Logistic/Drinking Water/Toilet/ Sitting Arrangement
- Infrastructure
- Supervision/Monitoring
- Duration of the training programme
- Frequency of the training programme
- Evaluation at the completion of the training programme
- Evaluation of the impact in the classroom transactions and students achievements
 - *Pupil-teacher interaction*
 - *Interaction among pupils*
 - *School community relation*
 - *Organization of co-curricular activities*
 - *Promotion of enrolment and retention*
 - *School environment*
 - *Classroom environment*

Education is an effective instrument of man making process. The teachers learn this through his education. A weak programme of teacher education is a national calamity. Dave (1999) emphasized five performance areas for effective teacher education. They are as follows: (i) performance in classroom (ii) school level performance (iii) performance in out of school activities, (iv) performances related to parental contact and co-operation (v) performance related to community contact and co-operation. The in-service education and training programmes attempts precisely for the same. Regarding teacher training, NPE (1986) states: "Teacher education is a continuous process, and its pre-service and in-service components are inseparable". Thus, in-service education of teacher at all levels is very important.

Literature Review

The research studies were reviewed by the investigator with reference to the quality of in-service training programme and the reviewed literatures revealed as follows:

Chacko (2000) investigated about the quality of in-service training imparted by Educational Technology faculty of DIETs in Kerala about the availability and utilization of educational

media. ET faculties of 8 DIETs and 400 primary school teachers who attended in-service training programme participated in the survey. The study reported that the in-service training programmes on operating technological equipments were far below the expected level. The study suggested improving the quality of in-service training programmes on Educational Technology for primary teachers. Yigit (2008) conducted a study on perception of teachers and evaluation of effectiveness of an in-service training (INSET) course about the use of instructional technologies and material development; applied a semi structured pre-questionnaire to the teachers. After the data analysis it was found that there was difference between the pre-course expectations and post course views of the teachers. At the same time they showed the positive attitude towards the use of instructional technologies and believed that these technologies had tremendous positive impact in enhancing on pupil's learning. The study revealed that there was positive perception of the teachers towards the in-service training programme. Chauhan et al. (2009) conducted a study on In-Service Teacher Training Programme under SSA in Sunni Educational Block of District Shimla: An Evaluative Study. The study aimed to assess the quality of training organized and its implementation in real classroom situation. It was revealed from the study: that the training component has been judged useful for teachers to a large extent in the areas of: use of Teaching Learning Material (TLM) in classroom situation, activity based teaching and child centered approach followed by subject enrichment. The Resource Persons stressed mainly on lecture-cum-discussion approach while communicating with the trainees instead of demonstration techniques, which were rarely used during the training programmes. Usefulness of resource material in the actual classroom situation was not as effective as it should have been. Pillai (1992); Butala (1987); Agarwal and Kamalesrao (1997); Dutta (2000); Prahallada (2003); and Vijayakumar (2005) have conducted different studies on the quality of in-service teacher training programme with regard to various dimensions of quality.

In-service training programmes are organized every year in the state of Odisha. The need for a comprehensive study was felt to assess the quality of in-services training programme and the impact of such programmes on the classroom practices of teachers. The present study is designed to study the perceptions of the stakeholders of elementary education, viz. teachers, trainers and supervisory personnel, about the quality of the in-service training programme for elementary school teachers with reference to Learning Materials/Training Packages for the training in the state of Odisha.

The major stakeholders of elementary education include beneficiary learners, parents, community; and the functionaries associated with the system such as teacher, trainers, supervisors, curriculum designer, textbook writer and administrator. In this study, the perception of two main types of stakeholders viz, teachers, teacher-trainers have been studied.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To study the perceptions of the elementary school teachers (trainees) of Odisha about the quality of learning materials/ training packages with other equipments of in-service training programme organized for them from time to time.
2. To study the perceptions of the resource persons (trainers) about the quality of learning materials/ training packages with other equipments of in-service training programme organized for them from time to time.
3. To study the problems, if any, associated with learning materials/ training packages with other equipments during the in-service training programme of Odisha from time to time.

Research Questions

The research questions formulated corresponding to these objectives of the study were as follows:

1. What do the elementary school teachers (trainees) perceive about the quality of learning materials/ training packages and other equipments for in-service training programme organized for them from time to time?
2. What do the resource persons (trainers) perceive about the quality of learning materials/ training packages and other equipments for in-service training programme organized for elementary school teachers from time to time?
3. What are the problems as perceived by the stakeholders associated with learning materials/ training packages and other equipments for in-service training programme organized for elementary school teachers from time to time?

Method of the Study

The present study came under the descriptive survey method. The main purpose of the present study was to assess the quality of in-service training programme for elementary teachers in Odisha with reference to one dimension i.e., Quality of learning materials / training packages. The study seeks to assess the perceptions of the teachers who received in-service training programme.

Sample of the Study

The sample for the study comprised as the key informants such as the elementary school teachers (trainees) who underwent the in-service training, the resource persons (trainers), who imparts the in-service training to the teachers and supervisory personnel (BRC,CRC Coordinators). Hence, the key informants were 420 numbers (N=420) of teachers, 72 resource persons and 21 supervisory personnel, from 21 CRCs. The CRCs were selected from 06 BRCs. The BRCs were selected from 03 district of Odisha (Puri, Ganjam and Sundergarh) through random and cluster sampling procedures.

Tools used for Data collection

For collection of data, three questionnaires such as Questionnaire for the Elementary School Teachers (QEST), Questionnaire for the Trainers/ Resource Persons (QTRP) and Questionnaire for the SSA functionaries (BRCC/ CRCC/ Pedagogy Co-coordinators etc.) (QSSAF) were used pertaining to six dimensions, out of which, quality of learning materials/training packages is vital dimension, which was analyzed in the paper. Although the questionnaire contained other five dimensions, this dimension was felt important to be discussed in the paper.

The Discussion and Findings

Under this dimension, the sub dimensions such as provision of training kit, provision of training packages, if provided, the mode of supply of such training package, the quality of learning materials / training packages, the language difficulty of such materials, provision of ICT and other equipments during the training etc. were included. The data were collected from teachers (trainees), Trainers and Supervisory Personnel. Separate questionnaires were used for data collection from these three stake holders. The data collected from different sources were cross validated through the source triangulation method. The analysis was done through simple statistical procedure such as percentage calculation. The data collected through the above three questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively by using percentage analysis technique as well as qualitatively with thick description as follows:

1. Perception of Teachers (trainees) about Learning Materials/Training Package

The perception of teachers (trainees) on the dimension of learning materials / training package and in the sub dimensions such as provision of learning materials, supply of learning materials, quality of learning materials and provision of ICT & other equipments were collected through the questionnaire prepared for them. The data collected through such

questionnaire were analyzed by using simple statistics (percentage) as per the following tables ranged from table-1 to 4:

Table-1
Perception of Teachers on Provision of Learning Materials/Training Package

N=420

Sl. No.	Dimension	Percentage of Trainees	
		Yes	No
1	Provision of training package /Learning Materials	378 (90.00%)	42 (10.00%)
2	Supply of training kit (pen, folder, writing pads etc.)	396 (94.29%)	24 (05.71%)

Table-2
Perception of Teachers on Supply of Learning Materials/Training Package

N=378

Sub-Dimension	Percentage of Trainees		
	Before Training	During Training	After Training
Supply schedule of training package	76 (20.11%)	234 (61.90%)	68 (17.99%)

Table-3
Perception of Teachers on Quality of Learning Materials/Training Package

N= 378

Sl No	Quality Dimensions	Percentage of Trainees in Rating the training materials				
		Poor	Manageable	Average	Good	Very good
1	Language	00 (00.0%)	12 (3.17%)	58 (15.34%)	192 (50.79%)	116 (30.69%)
2	Content Difficulty	02 (0.53%)	19 (05.03%)	65 (17.19%)	112 (29.63%)	180 (47.62%)
3	Examples in content	12 (03.17%)	25 (06.61%)	87 (23.01%)	137 (36.24%)	117 (30.95%)
4	Illustrations	15 (03.97%)	27 (07.14%)	62 (16.40%)	125 (33.07%)	149 (39.42%)
5	Exercises	30 (07.94%)	42 (11.11%)	67 (17.72%)	135 (35.71%)	104 (27.51%)
6	Sequential presentation	05 (01.32%)	22 (05.82%)	69 (18.25%)	145 (38.36%)	137 (36.24%)
7	Content Clarity	22 (05.82%)	45 (11.90%)	78 (20.63%)	163 (43.12%)	70 (18.52%)

Table-4
Perception of Teachers (Trainees) on use of ICT and other equipments during the training

N=420

Sl No	Tools/Equipments	Availability		Status of use		
		Yes	No	Frequently	Sometimes	Not at all
1	Black board	420 (100%)	0	155 (36.90%)	248 (59.05%)	17 (04.05%)
2	Computer with LCD Projector	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0

3	OHP	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0
4	Internet facility	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0
5	Television	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0
6	DVD player	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0
7	Tape recorder	0	420 (100%)	0	0	0
8	Science kit *	57 (13.57%)	363 (86.43%)	15 (26.32%)	42 (73.68%)	0
9	Math kit*	57 (13.57%)	363 (86.43%)	15 (26.32%)	42 (73.68%)	0
10	Globe**	358 (85.24%)	62 (14.76%)	226 (63.13%)	132 (36.87%)	0
11	Maps/Charts**	358 (85.24%)	62 (14.76%)	226 (63.13%)	132 (36.87%)	0

(*N=57, **N= 358)

In the table-1, the perception of teachers (trainees) on provision of learning materials was reported 'yes' in 378 (90.00%) out of 420, and 42 (10.00%) out of 420 expressed 'No'. Regarding supply of training kit (pen, folder, writing pads etc), 396 (94.29%) teachers (trainees) reported that there was supply of such training kits, only 24(5.71%) of teachers (trainees) expressed that; they did not receive training kit. It was evident there was provision of learning materials / training packages & kits, as majority of the teachers (trainees) (>90%) were of positive perception on this dimension.

In the table-2, it was assessed that the training packages was supplied to the trainees as 234 (61.90%), out of 378, received it during the training and 76 (20.11%) received the training packages before the training and 68(17.99%) received after the completion of training programme. It was concluded from the said table that, the supply of training package was being done in most of the cases during the training. Although, in some cases, it was being supplied before and in some cases after the training, but in majority of the cases, it was supplied during the training programme.

The teachers (trainees) who received the training packages (378 teachers out of 420) responded to the item on the quality of learning materials/ training packages. It was revealed from the analysis of the table-3, that 116 (30.69%), out of 378, expressed 'very good' on the language of the training package and the language was good for 192(50.79%) of trainees and it was average for 58 (15.34%) of such trainees. Regarding content difficulty 180 (47.62%) reported 'very good', 112(29.63%) reported 'good' that means majority of teachers (trainees) were of very strong positive perception in the content difficulty of the training materials. In other sub dimensions such as, examples in the content, illustrations, exercises, and sequential presentation of content matters in the learning materials / training package was good as majority of teachers(trainees) reported good & very good in these sub dimensions of the questionnaire. The content clarity in the learning materials was reported 'poor' by 22 (5.82%) of teachers (trainees), manageable by 45 (11.90%) and 'average' by 78 (20.63%). It indicated that, the content clarity in the learning materials / training packages was manageable for around 40% of teachers (trainees) and it was good for 60% of teachers. On the basis of the above analysis, it was clear that the quality of learning materials was good.

The table-4 revealed the perception of teachers on the use of ICT & other equipments during the training., there was no availability and use of computer with LCD projectors, OHP, internet facility, TV, DVD, Player, tape recorder in the training centres, during the training programme as reported by all the informants(trainees). As reported by all the informants (trainees), the black board was available in all the training centres and the perception of 17(4.05%) informants revealed Black board was not at all used during the training, 248 (59.05%) teachers reported black board was used sometimes and 155 (36.90%) teachers

(trainees) reported black board was used frequently. The majority of teachers (trainees) (86.43%) reported that there was no availability of science & math kit. Only 13.57% of teachers reported 'yes' in availability of such kits. Globes and Maps/charts were available in the training centres as perceived by majority of teachers (85.24%).

It was concluded that ICTs (computers, TV etc) were not available and not used at all in the training centres during the training. The other equipments such as Black board, globes and maps/charts were available but not being used frequently. The ICTs which are considered as the most vital equipments in the 21st century are not available and used in the in-service training programme in the state. It affects the quality.

2. Perception of Resource Persons about Learning Materials/Training Package

The perception of Resource Persons on learning materials/training package and in the sub dimensions under this such as provision of learning materials, supply of learning materials, quality of learning materials and provision of ICT & other equipments were collected through the questionnaire prepared for them. The data collected through such questionnaire were analyzed by using simple statistics (percentage) as per the following tables:

Table-5
Perception of Resource Persons on Provision of Learning Materials/Training Package and Kit

N=72

Sl. No.	Sub-Dimensions	Percentage of Resource Persons	
		Yes	No
1	Provision of Separate training manual / material for RPs	65 (90.28)	07 (9.72)
2	Provision of training package / material to all teachers (trainees)	66 (91.67)	06 (8.33)
3	Provision of training package for RPs prepared for teachers	53 (73.61)	19 (26.39)
4	Supply of training kit (pen, folder, writing pads etc.)	70 (97.22)	02 (2.78)
5	Preparation / presentation of additional training material for trainees by RPs	05 (6.94)	67 (93.06)
6	Satisfaction with equipments at training centre	15 (20.83)	57 (79.17)

From the table-5, 65 (90.28%) of resource person (trainers) perceived there was provision of separate training manual for them. Majority of resource person (trainers) (91.67%) perceived that there was provision of training package to all the teachers (trainees). The training package prepared for the trainees was also supplied to the RPs as 53(73.61%) expressed 'yes' to this item. Regarding supply of training kit (pen, folder etc) 70 RPs, out of 72, received it. Resource person (trainers) were not preparing any additional training materials for the trainees as 67 resource persons, out of 72, reported 'no' to this item. It was also revealed majority of resource person (trainers) (79.17%) were not satisfied with the equipments available at the training centers. It was concluded that, training material meant of resource persons and trainees; training kit were supplied to the resource persons and they did not prepare any additional training materials except such.

Table-6
Perception of Resource Persons on Supply of Learning Materials/Training Package

*N=65, **N=53

Sl No.	Sub-Dimensions	Receipt of training		
		Before Commencement of Training	On the day of Commencement of Training	During Training
1	Provision of Separate training manual / material for RPs*	42 (64.62)	19 (29.23)	04 (6.15)
2	Provision of training package prepared for teachers**	35 (66.04)	15 (28.30)	03 (5.66)

In table-6 the resource persons (trainers) who received separate training manual meant for them expressed their perception on the supply schedule of such manual. As revealed from the data collected from them, 42 (64.62%) resource persons received separate training manual meant for them before commencement of training where as 19 (29.23%) resource persons received on the day of commencement of training and only 4 (6.15%) resource persons received during the training programme. It was clear majority of resource persons (trainers) received training manual before training and majority of resource persons (trainers) (66.04%) received training package meant for the teachers (trainees) for reference to impart quality training.

Major findings

1. It was evident there was provision of learning materials / training packages & kits, as majority of the teachers (trainees) (>90%) were of positive perception on this dimension.
2. The supply of training package was being done in most of the cases during the training. Although, in some cases, it was being supplied before and in some cases after the training, but in majority of the cases, it was supplied during the training programme.
3. Sub dimensions such as, examples in the content, illustrations, exercises, and sequential presentation of content matters in the learning materials / training package was good as majority (>50%) of teachers (trainees) reported good & very good in these sub dimensions of the questionnaire.
4. ICTs (computers, TV etc) were not available and not used at all in the training centres during the training. The other equipments such as Black board, globes and maps/charts were available but not being used frequently.
5. Majority of resource person (trainers) (91.67%) perceived that there was provision of training package to all the teachers (trainees)
6. The resource persons did not prepare any additional training materials except the materials supplied to them.
7. Majority of resource persons (trainers) received training manual before training and approximately 66.04% received training package meant for the teachers (trainees) for using as reference to impart quality training.

Conclusion

The perception of the elementary teachers revealed about the good training packages/learning materials for the training programme that provision of learning materials / training packages & kits is available for the teachers as majority of the teachers (trainees) (>90%) were of positive perception on this dimension. Training package is supplied although, in some cases, before and in some cases after the training, but in majority of the cases, it is supplied during the

training programme. The the quality of learning materials is good. The vital part is neglected in the training programme i.e., ICT (computers, TV etc). The other equipments such as Black board, globes and maps/charts are available but not being used frequently. If the ICTs will be integrated in the training programme, the quality of such programme will be enhances as the 21st century demands it. Hence, ICT need to be integrated in the in-service training programme.

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