



DO ORIENTATION PROGRAMS REALLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION?

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Introduction

The University Grants commission (UGC) established Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) with an objective to:

1. Understand the significance of education in general and higher education in particular, in the global and Indian contexts;
2. Understand the linkages between education and economic and socio-economic and cultural development, with particular reference to the Indian polity where democracy, secularism and social equity are the basic tenets of society;
3. Acquire and improve art of teaching at the college/ university level to achieve goals of higher education;
4. Keep abreast of the latest developments in their specific subjects;
5. Understand the organization and management of a college/university and to perceive the role of a teachers in the total system;
6. Utilise opportunities for development of personality, initiative and creativity; and
7. Promote computer literacy as well use of ICT in teaching and learning process. promotes

The concept of an Orientation Programme emphasizes teachers as agents for socio-economic change and national development and underlines the need to make them skill-oriented teachers. The philosophy and objectives of the Orientation Courses are significantly different from the traditional B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes. These programmes have been linked with the career advancement of the teachers and the teacher has to complete one Orientation and One refresher programme for his/her first promotion and after that he/she has to attend 2 refresher courses for

his/her next promotion. With the implementation of the sixth pay package the teacher has to acquire required grade points to become eligible for the promotion. The teachers can earn certain number of grade points by participating in various Faculty Development Programmes organised by the Academic Staff College. Teacher development programs provide an Understanding of the Benchmarks for Achievement to the faculties. It helps Avoid Teacher Burnout New teachers have many challenges that they face each day. [Effective faculty](#) training helps prepare new teachers for these challenges. It Stops Costly Experimenting on Students. Faculty development through orientation programs is often called, has become an increasingly important component of higher education. Whereas it was once assumed that a competent basic or individual who joins education field would naturally be an effective teacher, it is now acknowledged that preparation for teaching is essential. Given the increasing complexity and pressures of education industry, new approaches to teaching and learning, and competing demands on teachers' time, faculty members require a broad range of teaching and learning strategies that can be used in diverse settings. To help faculty members fulfill their multiple roles, a variety of orientation and faculty development programs and activities have been designed and implemented.

Importance of the research: The rise in higher education has led to significant change in educational patterns. This provides enormous potential for the country and its educational system. As the need of higher education is continuously increasing, it becomes inevitable to research paper the changing patterns in educational system. Thus in order to assess the current scenario in UGC-Academic Staff Collages and anticipate future challenges in depth analysis of future requirements for the faculties, the research paper of various aspects of educational system has become all the more important. The present research paper will prove to be mile stone in the field of faculty development initiatives taken by various states. In the light of the changing teaching learning scenario, it becomes imperative to have an exclusive analysis of a Comparative research paper on Impact of Orientation Programs conducted by UGC-Academic Staff Colleges, with special reference to Academic Staff colleges in Maharashtra and Gujarat". The present research paper is undertaken with the very purpose of researching the changing scenario and need of higher education and the pattern of orientation programs and understands the future requirements of the faculties. Sound research methods are used to do the present research of Orientation Programs in selected States. The most important element associated with the research of Orientation Programs are the faculties (participating teachers). Therefore, the

opinion of faculties needs to be studied. These opinions are gathered by researcher with the help of structured questionnaires. Separate questionnaires are designed for faculties, Principals and directors of the UGC-Academic Staff Colleges.

The researcher is of the view that this research is novel in the following respect –

- a) So far, no research has been done on exclusive analysis of a Comparative research on Impact of Orientation Programs conducted by UGC-Academic Staff Colleges, with specific reference to UGC-Academic Staff Colleges. Therefore, the work is original and first of its kind in the field of orientation to the faculties.
- b) The research paper concerns itself with Orientation Programs, which is unique in itself as the orientation courses are offered to the newly appointed teachers in higher education system.
- c) The research paper has concentrated upon two states and respective faculties. Firstly, those faculties who have attended Orientation Program from UGC-Academic Staff Colleges located either in Maharashtra and Gujarat, and lastly the Principals of colleges located in these states and Directors of respective UGC-Academic Staff Collages.

Research design: The report is about various aspects of research design. Research methods are broadly divided into two categories i.e. Primary and secondary data.

a) Primary data: Through Questionnaires, Interviews, Discussions and observations)

The primary data for this purpose is collected on the basis of field survey. Two questionnaires will be prepared for this purpose to be filled by free and frank discussions with selected respondents, relevant literatures of educational institute. One questionnaire was specifically prepared for the faculties attending the Orientation Program another questionnaire was prepared for the Directors of UGC-Academic Staff Colleges within the region and the third questionnaire was prepared specifically for the Principals of the colleges from the study area.

- b) Secondary data:** Secondary source of the data will be collected from internet and various libraries. Further, important contributions in the subject matter, from various, relevant books, reports literatures, Journals, magazines, periodicals, reports, bulletins, survey material, newspapers published in India & abroad shall also used for study. The same will be acknowledged at various relevant points in the thesis and listing was made at Bibliography.

Hypotheses 1

H1 : Linking of completion of the program and career advancement has changed the basic motive of attending the program for the teachers.

Director's Opinion	1	2	3	4	5	Total
programme and career advancement has changed to basic motive for attending the programme for the teachers.	3 (37.5)	2 (25)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	2 (25)	8 (100)

(Questionnaire of Directors – Section G – Q.5)

Interpretation: From the data, it can be interpreted that 62.5% of the respondents from the director's category are agreeing on the fact that the linkage between completion of the Orientation Program and Career Advancement has changed the motive of attending the Orientation Program, while 37.5% of the respondents are not agreeing this fact.

Conclusion: Thus, from the table and percentage analysis, it is clear that directors clearly have the opinion regarding strategic implications of linkage between the basic moral of the participants behind attending and completion of Orientation Program. Researcher can conclude that the relationship between attending the training program and its association with the career advancement has changed the motive towards attending the Orientation Program.

Hypothesis 2:

H1: There is a dependency between the nature of appointment of the faculties and intention behind attending the orientation program

This hypothesis can be tested using Chi-Square test. The table showing the result of chi-square test analysis is shown in the following tables –

Test Statistics

	Opinion
Chi-Square	494.1
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

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a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.0.

Frequencies

Opinion

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Disagree	212	60.0	152.0
Disagree	15	60.0	-45.0
Neutral	3	60.0	-57.0
Agree	32	60.0	-28.0
Strongly Agree	38	60.0	-22.0
Total	300		

(Source: Questionnaire of faculties – Q.7)

Inference : From the above chi-square test statistics, it can be interpreted that there are significant differences in the frequency of attitude towards attending Orientation Programme in higher education. And the results show that most of the respondents from faculties do agree with the fact that nature of appointment of the faculty affects intention behind attending the Orientation Program (chi-square value 494.1, $p < 0.05$). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: 3

H1: There is a dependency between the nature of the status of the academic staff collages and quality of the orientation programs

Justification: This hypothesis can be tested using simple percentage analysis as from the responses given by the Directors (8 in numbers for Maharashtra and Gujarat), it is clearly observed that all the Directors i.e. (100%) have the opinion that scheme based, i.e. temporary status of the institutes i.e. UGC-Academic Staff Colleges have the impact on the quality of the

Orientation Program. The University Grants Commission has been running this Academic Staff Orientation Scheme on plan basis, providing extensions for five years.

The elements associated with the collages are staff members. The appointment of these staff members depends upon the status of these staff collages

The following table shows the result of the responses given by the directors.

Opinion

Yes	8	0	100
No	0	0	0
Total	8	0	100

(Source: Questionnaire of directors)

Inference : From the above table, it can be interpreted that there is a dependency between the nature of the status of the academic staff collages and quality of the orientation program. Thus null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Concluding remark: The UGC-Academic Staff Collages in Maharashtra and Gujarat are conducting the Orientation Programs since 1988. These UGC-Academic Staff Collages do not possess permanent status as it is a plan based scheme, funded by the University Grants Commission. Naturally the human resources associated with this collages do not have the permanent status of their employment. As the Academic Staff Collages do not have the permanent status, the sustainable development of the faculties and other resources through the grants coming from the UGC is not possible .This instability in terms of existence has long term impact on the human resources working in Academic Staff Collages because their employment conditions i.e. appointment orders are temporary/contractual in nature.Faculty development through Orientation Programs can be defined as organizationally supported initiatives designed to improve faculty performance or enhance the quality of faculty work life. Although, the earliest forms of faculty development can be traced to sabbaticals offered as early as 1988 in India, the contours of contemporary faculty development programs can be found in the 1950s and 1960s. New faculty members are hired on many campuses to coordinate and deliver workshops and

other services to faculty members. The high quality teaching depended on a deep understanding of students and how they learn. This approach valued students as co creators of knowledge, and assigned importance to the experiences and expertise that they bring into the classroom. Teacher education programs can make a difference to student achievement depending on the type of education program and support that is put in place. Specific factors such as the years of teacher training, the teacher's verbal fluency, subject matter knowledge, having reference books and materials and knowing how to use them, teacher expectation of student's performance, time spent on classroom preparation, and frequent monitoring of student progress are all key factors identified in present research paper that have a positive bearing on the quality of teachers' performance and, consequently, student achievement. Many of these factors were confirmed by the researcher.

Suggestions of the research paper: Appointments of the faculties in academic staff collages:

- 1: The human resources associated with the Academic Staff Collages do not have the permanent status of their employment. Their appointments are contractual appointments as the academic staff collages do not have the permanent status. This scenario is responsible for creating the sense of uncertainty amongst the staff working for Academic Staff Colleges. This policy needs to be relooked at by the University Grants Commission.
- 2: There should be proper evaluation of the faculties before linking attendance for the training program and its relation with the career advancement has changed the motive towards attending the Orientation Program.
- 3: Faculty program should be tailor made for the various courses.

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