



IN-SERVICE TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PRESENT SCENARIO

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Abstract

The government of India has made commitments to fulfill the goals of “Education for All” and advocated that by 2015 all children should have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. In spite of considerable progress made during the last three decades, the problem of illiteracy still continues to be the main national concern. India is home to almost 35% of the world’s illiterates. The entire education system needs a thorough reorientation NPE(1986) placed great emphasis on professional development through pre-service and in-service teacher education. Many agencies and organizations conduct in-service programmes for professional development of teachers. There are few lacunae which needs to be addressed urgently through follow up strategies. Professional development of teachers constitutes developing awareness about their role and responsibilities to the profession they are pursuing. It is often self directed, involving reading, critical reflection, conscious analysis of oneself and one’s own work and a keen observation of learners and learning strategies (Singh 2008). Teacher development is a precursor of professional development. Teacher development is a holistic term used in teacher preparation programmes. A programme in teacher development should cater to the developing of right skills, Proper attitudes and adequate knowledge to implement the skills and attitudes developed in the work they do. Teacher development is contrasted with teacher training and teacher education which can both be offered by outside agencies, while development can happen only by one’s own involvement (Wallace 1991). The NPE 1986 have placed great emphasis on the professional development of teachers through two outside agencies i.e. teacher education and teacher training. The NPE 1986 also maintained that pre-service and in-service teacher education are inseparable for the development of teachers.



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- In Service-Training Programme are offered to teachers both at school and college levels. In service teacher education received support through central government funding for the establishment of IASEs in chosen institutions and university departments of education and DIETS in each district. These institutions, together with SCERTs in states, provided space for conducting in-services courses for teachers.

- The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA,2001) has also placed emphasis on continuous in-service teacher education requiring each teacher to receive 20 days of training every year.
- Ministry of Human resource development also sponsored a sustained development programme for English teachers since 1985 during the VI five year plan. These programmes are designed to train teachers at the secondary school level. This training programme is offered at two levels,
 - at the level of trainers
 - at the level of teachers

Trainers are selected on the basis of experience and competence in teaching by the District education officer. Annually, a three month programme called Resource person training is offered to the selected personnel at Hyderabad. This programme has two major parts focusing on competence development and professional development. As a part of competence, the teachers are given inputs to develop their competence and professional development takes care of their ability to train people, design training programmes and maintain records to design follow up programmes. The first six months are devoted to competence development and rest of the time is given to the professional development of the teachers.

- Another successful inservice programme was launched by the central board of secondary education. In 1989, new course books were introduced in all the CBSE affiliated schools across the country in classes IX and X. When these books were introduced, rightly it was also felt necessary to train teachers to use the new package. A massive training programme was undertaken across the country involving all the teachers at the secondary school level
- At the national level organizations like the NCERT, NIEPA, NCTE, AICE, UGC, DEC, devise policy frameworks for in-service teacher professional development and popularize them through periodical seminars, workshops, conferences etc. These national level institutions also organize international seminars, workshops, conferences etc. from time to time
- Distance education mode is being increasingly used in India for promoting education at all levels. Besides a national level open and distance learning (ODL) university-Indira Gandhi National level open university (Ignou)-most of the other major states have also set up their own ODL universities. The distance education mode has a special advantage in in-service teacher education programme. Distance

education is particularly suited to the in-service women, especially the working rural women, who were denied opportunity due to various social, economic, historical, cultural and even religious factors.

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has been organizing refresher courses and orientation programmes for college and university teachers. Every teacher at this level needs to attend three courses before becoming eligible for further promotion. UGC has established special institutes in many of the universities across the country. These are called Academic staff colleges. Both refresher course and orientation course are of three week duration.

Other Professional Activities for Teachers:

- All teachers are members of associations.
- Teacher involvement in preparation of text books and teaching modules.
- Teachers have opportunities to work in Block and cluster Resource centers.
- Teachers are also members of committees formulating educational policies.

There is thus a plethora of opportunities and avenues for the continued in-service professional development of teachers. As discussed above In-Service teachers have many opportunities for their professional development but there are few lacunae in each of the in-service teacher education programme like:

- Mis-management of programmes
- Busy schedule of key note personalities
- Lack of basic facilities
- Sense of insecurity among private teachers
- Lack of competition among government teachers
- Defective selection procedure of the teachers
- Politics among teachers
- Autocratic behaviour of management towards teachers
- Insufficient empirical research
- No upto date knowledge
- Less interest of the teachers in such in-service programmes
- Lack of proper guidance
- Absence of professional attitude
- Faulty methods of teaching etc.

Suggestions

To remove the problems of in-service teacher education programme, a systematic follow up programme at the end of in-service programme should exist. The trainer should be in touch with the trainees and receive feedback of trainees from the institutions, where they are working. Even trainers can visit the schools, observe the work put in by the trainee and offer feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Another way of follow up the trainees is that the institutions themselves send the feedback of the trainees to the trainers after 1 month or so. This can be done by recruiting another committee for follow-up services only, who follow the trainees afterwards give reports to the trainers.

Conclusion

National Policy of education NPE, 1986 placed emphasis on professional development of teachers through pre-service and in-service teacher education. Studies revealed that there are 220,000 lecturers working in colleges and universities, who are untrained. Therefore in-service teacher training programme is being effective for the professional development of teachers and many agencies and organizations through government are conducting the in-service programme. Through the follow up strategies by the trainers the in-service programmes can be made successful. The teacher professional development is of utmost importance in ensuring quality in the educational programme. This aspect has been a matter of serious concern among world education community over the last two decades. It is being given serious attention in India also.

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