

In-Service Training Programme For Educational Institutions: A Theoretical Frame Work

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Abstract: Training provided to teachers while they are on the job has been the primary motivation behind many of the developments that have taken place in the field of education, it is essential for teachers to remain updated on the most significant ideas as they have an active and essential role in nurturing the generation which would be productive to the society. This study is intended to enlighten readers on the concept of in-service training programmes. The study highlighted the historical perspective, the role of state and national level training institutions, and the role of national and international agencies, in providing theoretical frameworks and trends in in-service training programmes. It enlightens authorities in educational institutions to continue collaboration with national and international agencies and design, implement and evaluate in-service training programmes for quality and impactful professional development initiatives.

Keywords: Training, In-service training, Emerging trends in training, Role agencies in training

Introduction

In-service training programmes are essential and have a significant role in enhancing the knowledge, skills and professional growth of individuals across various sectors. It is essential for keeping professionals abreast of advancements in their respective fields and ensuring the delivery of high quality services (Wilson & MCLean, 1994). Furthermore, it has a significant influence on employee job satisfaction, performance and organizational effectiveness (Smith & Johnson, 2010).

In-service training programmes are particularly crucial for educators to continuously improve their pedagogical practices, adapt to evolving educational trends and meet the changing students' requirements (Guskey. 2002). Effective in-service training enables teachers to implement evidence based instructional strategies, differentiate instruction and provide an essential environment that supports students' success (Hammond et.al., 2009). Moreover, in-service training programmes can also contribute to organizational development and innovation within educational institutions (Fullan, 2001). By investing in the professional development of its staff educational institutions can cultivate the habit of upskilling, collaboration and lifelong learning (Hargreaves, 1998). However, despite the recognized benefits of in-service training, designing and implementing effective programmes is not an easy task as it poses continuous challenges (Day et.al., 2005) such

as time constraints, funding limitations and varying levels of prior knowledge and experience among participants can impact the success of training initiatives (Loucks-Horsley et.al., 2003).

Therefore, it is imperative to carefully plan and tailor in-service training programmes to the specific needs and contexts of participants (Garet et.al., 2001). By incorporating principles of adult learning theory, providing opportunities for active engagement and reflection and offering continuous support and feedback (Dirkx et.al., 2006) (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). This study aims to explore the historical perspective, the role of state and national level training institutions, and the role of national and international agencies, in providing theoretical frameworks and trends in in-service training programmes.

Review of literature

Singh (2013) conducted an evaluative study on in-service training under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Himachal Pradesh. The findings highlighted deficiencies in content enrichment and evaluation mechanisms. Awasthi (2014) underscored the need for systematic approaches and adequate budget allocation to improve in-service training and enhance student learning outcomes. Mohanty (2014) investigated the impact of in-service training on classroom practices in Odisha, revealing positive changes in teaching techniques and student participation. However, Iqbal (2016) found ICT Training for primary teachers in Delhi to be ineffective, citing issues with resource utilization and teacher satisfaction. Further, Yadav et al., (2016) evaluated NCERT's in-service training programmes and identified that the NCERT catered to the different needs of varied categories of participants. Singh (2022) identified the positive effect of in-service training according to national education policy and no effect was observed in using audio-visual aids in the classroom despite having training. Alfaidi & Elhassan (2020) identified the training focused on increasing teachers' expertise and did not address the teachers' educational needs. Kivirand et al., (2021) identified that the school teams valued in-service training however, they felt a coherent approach to relevant issues is needed.

Objectives of the study

- To provide essential background information for providing the in-service training programme
- To highlight the recent trend in in-service training programmes for educational institutions

Historical perspective

The roots of in-service education can be traced back to Lord Curzon's resolution on Education policy (1904) which stated, "The trained students whom the college has sent out should be occasionally brought together again in seeing that the influence of the college makes itself felt in the school".

Hortog Committee (1929) and Sargent Plan (1944) referred to in-service education as refresher courses and recommended for their organization on a continuing basis.

The University Education Commission's (1949) observation that a teacher to keep alive and fresh should become a learner from time to time, highlighted the importance of in-service education for teachers.

The establishment of the Central Institute of Education (CIE) in 1947 provided the impetus to the continuous professional development of school teachers for which the institute was expected to carry out systematic field studies to assess teachers' needs and generate meaningful and tested training modes.

The decade of 1950s and 1960s witnessed the movement of extension services in education. The first conferences of principals of training colleges (1950) at Baroda recommended that "Refresher courses of both general and special types should be organized for ensuring continued professional growth of trained teachers and to prevent their lapse into unprogressive methods".

The Special Orientation Programme for Primary School Teachers (SOPT) is a centrally sponsored programme scheme in operation since 1993-94. Under this programme, primary school teachers are being trained for 7 days with special emphasis on developing their competencies in the use OB kits, making use of MLL approach in developing requisite competencies among primary school pupils. The programme is being implemented in the country in collaboration with SCERTs/ SCEs of different states.

In 1996, the Department of Teacher Education and Extension (DTEE) of NCERT conducted an impact study in close collaboration with the Regional Institute of Education. The study titled, "Impact of SOPT training on classroom practices" was carried out in 8 states by RIEs DIETs of NCERT. The major objective of the study was to find out the quality of training provided under the scheme and to ascertain the impact of training on teachers' classroom practices. The instruments like The Academic Awareness Questionnaire (AAQ), Personal Information Schedule (PIS) and Perception Scale (PS) were used for the purpose of the collection of data. Besides these tools, qualitative research techniques like classroom observation (CO) and Focused Group Discussion (FGD) were used to solicit information from the participants. Pre-test and post-test design was used to ascertain the training gain.

The quality of SOPT was adjudged through teachers' perception of training and also by using the Focused Group Discussion Technique. As indicators of the quality of training, the findings of the studies revealed the inadequacy of physical facilities at the training centres, the non-availability of training material in a few centres, absence and use of media support in training centres. Rao et.al.(1998)' Pandhi (1996); Agarwal et.al (1996).

The impact of training was also studied in terms of the achievement of teachers in the awareness and performance modules presented/ transacted during 7 days of training as well as in the real

classroom teaching of teachers. A significant gain was found in terms of knowledge and comprehension of the awareness and performance module (Gupta, 2000); (Rao et.al., 1998). The studies further revealed that teachers used child centered approaches, evaluation techniques and support materials to an extent in their classroom context. Though the classroom performance of teachers improved in the dimensions covered under SOPT, however, the observation revealed seldom use of OB materials and remedial measures in the teaching processes (Rao et.al., 1998). These studies have revealed that the objectives of SOPT have been achieved to a large extent. However, to enhance the impact of training in the classroom, the states may provide additional training content according to the local specific needs of the teachers.

Institutional mechanism

India, over the years, has set up an extensive network of teacher training institutions at all levels. The first systemic effort for in-service education was initiated in the year 1995 with the establishment of the Extension Services Centers in teacher training institutions. However, in pursuance of recommendations of the National Policy on Education-1986, new institutions at different levels have been set up.

At the national level, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Central Institute of Languages (CIIL) and Center for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) have the mandate to provide academic resource support to institutions comprising training network at the state and district levels. Efforts have been initiated during the past few years to gradually develop a network of institutions like DIETs, CTEs and IASEs with the mandate to provide in-service education to primary and secondary school teachers respectively. Against a target of one DIET per district, approximately 457 DIETs have been sanctioned so far and thus the target as per the configuration of the district during 1986-87 has been fully achieved. However, in the case of the College of Teacher Education (CTEs) only 76 institutions have been sanctioned against a target of 50, the number of institutions established so far is around 36.

DIETs have been set up in almost all districts of the country however, most of them are not fully operational. A study conducted by NCERT (1999) in this regard has revealed:-

1. Out of 156 DIETs included in the sample of the study, 82 DIETs have been established by upgrading the existing elementary teacher training institutions.
2. In about 50 percent of states, DIETS are functioning under the administrative control of either the Directorate of School Education or the Directorate of Elementary Education and in the remaining states; DIETs are under the control of SCERTs.
3. Principals of DIETs have been given the rank equivalent to Deputy Director of Education Officer in most of the states.
4. On average, more than 10 positions of lecturers or senior lecturers are lying vacant in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tripura and Utter Pradesh, while the number of

vacant posts is between 5-10 in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Pondicherry and Mizoram.

5. The mode of recruitment of teachers in DIETs is mainly deputation or transfer in the states.
6. A majority of teacher educators hold post-graduation degrees in 2nd division.
7. Approximately 90 percent of DIET teachers possess a B.Ed. degree out of which 80 percent have done it on a full time basis in teacher training colleges while the remaining 10 percent have acquired it through correspondence. Approximately 51 percent of teacher educators possess M.ed. degree also out of whom 22 percent have done it on full time basis and the remaining 29 percent have acquired it through correspondence.

In most of the states, only two functions, namely, pre-service teacher education and in-service education of teachers are being performed by these institutions. The number of DIETs where research and development activities have been initiated is quite small. The number of DIETs which are upgraded Elementary Teacher Training Institutions is quite substantial. It is evident from the findings given above that all the states have not appreciated the vision of the scheme which envisages the establishment of resource institutions at the grassroots level. However, the fact that most of the DIETs have started organization of teachers' in-service education is indeed a positive development.

Achievement in the case of DIETs is satisfactory but in the case of IASEs and CTEs it is indeed depressing as only a handful of them have started in-service education programmes for secondary school teachers and the majority of them continue to perform the same functions as they were performing prior to their being named as CTEs and IASEs. There is a need to further augment the existing training network by setting up more CTEs and IASEs and strengthening them in the right perspectives.

State Boards of Education in some states are entrusted with the responsibility of imparting in-service education to secondary school teachers. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has set up its own training centres for imparting training to different categories of its teachers on a continuing basis. Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti has also taken the initiative in this direction and is in the process of establishing an institutional mechanism for imparting to its teachers on a continuing basis.

Primary teacher training and secondary teacher training for untrained teachers are being launched by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to clear the backlog of untrained teachers in some specific states.

As the field of teacher education is multifaceted, we cannot ignore several other institutions engaged in area-specific programmes. The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) at Hyderabad and the Regional Institute of English have contributed to preparing teachers to teach English as a foreign language and second language. The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) of Mysore and Kendriya Hindi Sansthan Agra, Sanskrit Vidya Peethas are providing in-service education in their respective domains. The National Institute of Mental

Retardation, National Institute of Hearing Handicapped, National Institute of visual impairment and National Institute of Orthopedic Handicapped have made immense contributions in not only preparing teachers in their specialized areas but also providing in-service education cannot be ignored, Thus, it is evident that a vast network of institutions having expertise in the organization of in-service education of teachers at all stages of school education was planned and to some extent it has been established during the last two decades of the 20th century.

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed a multiplicity of training schemes and projects like SOPT, National Assessment Programme (NAP) and DPEP addressed to primary school teachers, It is high time to initiate such concerted initiatives in the case of secondary education also.

Role of International Agencies

International agencies like UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA have provided substantial assistance in the field of teacher education during the last five decades. Assistance has come in many forms in the area of teacher education, science education and population education depending on the needs of the country. In-service education of teachers, both at elementary and secondary stages have also received due assistance to enhance the teaching competencies of the teachers.

UNESCO has influenced the teachers' in-service education to a great extent. To cite a few examples, the Center for Educational Technology (CET) which was established in 1972 in NCERT was a joint support project of the UNDP-UNESCO mission, A notable aspect of the collaboration was the pilot SITE for large-scale use of satellite television as an educational medium for teaching science to 47000 primary teachers in 24 days which otherwise would have taken a much longer time.

India has the largest UNICEF programme at different levels and sectors of education. In 1964, UNICEF joined hands with UNESCO and the Government of India in the task of shaping and financially supporting a mutually agreed plan of operation, the re-organization and expansion of the teaching of science to students throughout the school stage. By 1978, over 48000 science kits were supplied and 75000 primary school teachers, teacher educators, science supervisors, and craft instructors were trained.

Assisted by International agencies, some of the states have initiated primary education projects. Andhra Pradesh with the financial assistance of the ODA of the UK. It focused on initial in-service training of teachers, 'the construction of teachers' centres for continuous mutual academic support, supply of materials to schools and teacher centres to organize activities. With the UNICEF's support, the Bihar Education Project (BEP) was initiated in 1991. BEP had adopted a two-phase in-service training module. The first phase was 10 days duration and had three main components- awareness, motivation and child-centred training, and the second phase was eleven days in

duration dealing with MLL, the development of learning skills in languages, mathematics and environmental studies.

The UNICEF-sponsored Teacher Empowerment project began in 12 tribal blocks in Madhya Pradesh in 1992 which spread to Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Utter Pradesh. It involved in-service training of teachers, administrators and DIET/SCERT faculty. The UNICEF's contribution in Shikshak Samkhyia Project in Madhya Pradesh has been widely appreciated.

United Nations Population Fund has contributed immensely by organizing in-service training programmes on population education for teachers and educational personnel. UNICEF is also assisting in providing training to teachers, Anganwadi Workers and DIET faculty under the ECCE programme.

Emerging trends

We have not been able to develop a well-defined policy for teachers' in-service education. The schemes and projects implemented so far can at best be labelled as sporadic efforts in the absence of a clear-cut policy framework. There is an urgent need to evolve a 'staff development and training policy' which should define the broad parameters of teachers' professional growth such as dimensions of development and the nature, periodicity, context and methodology of in-service training. More specially, the policy should address the following:

- Dimensions and methodology of staff development
- Objectives of in-service education
- Periodicity of in-service training, whether it should be once in 4-5 years or it should be every year
- Duration of training in terms of number of days, weeks or months
- Context of training
- Methodology of training
- Coverage and target groups
- Utilizations and impact of training

Roles and responsibilities of different agencies/ organizations

Besides the above mentioned issues, the proposed policy should meet the challenges of numbers and the challenges of adhocism prevalent in the system of teachers' in-service education. The number of school teachers at present in the country is around five million. Besides these teachers, many states have employed para-teachers, shiksha karmis, contract teachers, Vidhya upasak etc at the elementary level to assist the regular teachers. Even after the establishment of 250 CTEs and IASEs, the number of institutions included in the training network shall be around 700. Supposing an institution provides training to 600 teachers in a year as stipulated in the DIET guidelines, the total number of teachers to be trained by 700 institutions shall be around 4 lakh only.

With this institutional mechanism, a period of 12 years shall be required to complete one cycle of training, which is too long a period to sustain the training gains and to check obsolescence. The number of training institutions included in the training grid shall have to be increased substantially. This can be easily achieved by making all teacher training institutions bimodal viz imparting both pre-service and in-service education to teachers. This shall increase the number of in-service institutions to about 2000 with a capacity to organize training for about 12 lakh teachers every year. Thus it will be possible to complete one cycle of training in 4 years' time. However, if the proposed staff development policy stipulates that every teacher must get an opportunity to undergo in-service training every year, then 4-5 BRCs attached to a nodal training institution should also perform part of the national training network.

A major challenge of teachers' in-service education is the non-availability of suitable resource persons in adequate numbers in different parts of the country. The experience in the use of the cascade model has shown that considerable dilution in the quality of training takes place during the successive stages in the training of teachers and resource persons. To minimize the dilution in quality, it is imperative to reduce the number of tiers if direct training of teachers by the experts is not possible. The requisite number of resource persons in the states could be trained by the national level experts through the teleconferencing mode provided presentation and learning centres in adequate numbers are set up at the national, state and institutional levels. The establishment of around 30 presentation centres and around 2000 learning centres shall go a long way towards the institutionalization and professionalization of teachers' in-service education.

The following interventions at the policy level are required to professionalize teachers' in-service education.

- Formulation of a comprehensive staff development policy for teachers including their continuing in-service education.
- Strengthening the existing training network by making all teacher training institutions bimodal, that is, every training institution should provide both pre-service and in-service education.
- Formulation and implementation of a scheme on the pattern of Operation Blackboard for providing essential facilities to all the training institutions so as to equip them to undertake in-service education.
- Establishment of around 30 presentation centres and 2000 learning centres to facilitate the use of interactive as an essential component of the training strategy.
- Institutions of INSET programmes of longer duration (at least 6 months) involving both face to face and distance mode.
- Making successful completion of in-service education as part of service conditions of teachers.

To conclude, the in-service education of teachers has witnessed major changes in policies and strategies for its implementation during post independence development. It has transversed a long

journey from a mere concept to a process and is now recognized as an important instrument for teachers' professional growth on a continuing basis. There is a paradigm shift in the process; substantial changes have taken place in the content and process of in-service teacher education based on the recommendations of different commissions and committees. A vast network of institutions has been established during the last decade of the 20th century to organize in-service education of teachers at all stages of school education. The country has also gained substantial experience in the use of communication technology and in the organization of mass in-service training programmes for teachers. Though the initiatives in this direction are widely acknowledged, yet to professionalize in-service training, policy level interventions are required for the formulation of a comprehensive staff development policy.

Conclusion

The exploration of the historical perspective, role of state and national level training institutes and the involvement of national and international agencies in in-service training programmes has provided valuable insights into the theoretical frameworks and trends shaping professional development initiatives. The evolution of in-service training over time reflects a growing reorganization of its importance in enhancing the knowledge skills and effectiveness of educators. State and national level training institutions play a vital role in coordination and delivering in-service training programmes while national and international agencies play a pivotal role in providing theoretical frameworks and best practices.

Moreover, the analysis of theoretical frameworks and trends in in-service training programme highlights the significance of incorporating principles of learning theory, providing opportunities for active engagement and reflection and offering ongoing support and feedback. These principles are essential for designing and contexts of educators.

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