



Effectiveness of In-Service Training Imparted by DIETs

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INTRODUCTION

It is said that the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of its citizens depends not exclusively but in critical measures upon the quality of their education. The quality of their education depends, more than any other single factor, upon the quality of their teachers. A Teacher happens to be the key person to initiate and support change for educational improvements. With the increasing complexity of problems, expectations from teachers are also increasing. To enable a teacher to create thirst for knowledge amongst his pupils, he must continue to learn and grow professionally. Thus, education of teachers at all levels is highly significant. In order to enable the teachers to act as catalyst in the process of developing the future citizens, the Teachers needs to be provided training not only pre-service but most importantly the in-service also. In this paper the author tried to examine the relevance of teacher education with the quality at schools. Major emphasis is on training imparted by DIETs i.e in-service teacher education at elementary level and its effectiveness.

The role of the teachers becomes important in this scientific era. The teachers must be knowledgeable about the new innovations and technological advancement. Teaching is considered as an art, a science and a skill. Thus, content mastery as well as expertise over skill and performance is essential qualities of a teacher. For producing competent and committed teachers, there are teachers education programmes in which training is imparted to the teachers and he/she gets mastery over skills, content and performance. But one important thing is only getting training once in a life is not enough for any teacher. Therefore in-service training programmes along with the pre-service training programme are needed for the teachers. It has been confirmed through various researches and studies that in-service training programmes positively improves the quality of education imparted by the teacher. Kothari

(2011) Gupta (1998), Rao (2003) concluded in their studies that in-service training programmes were useful to perform more effectively and makes a difference in teachers' behaviour and most of teacher desired to have continuing education in school subjects to get mastery over them. It was also found in the above studies that these training programmes were finally beneficial for school students also.

According to Report to the People on Education, 2010-11 (Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) 2012). To improve teacher presence in schools, around 11.13 lakh teachers have been recruited till September, 2010 and significant progress has been made in many states like Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Haryana etc. SSA provides for annual in-service training up to 20 days to all teachers to upgrade their skills and 39.48 lakh teachers have been approved for in-service training in 2010-11 under SSA. All the training programmes cover pedagogical issues aimed at improving teaching-learning transactions at classroom level and also focus on major areas including guiding principles of National Curriculum Framework (NCF -2005). The revised SSA norms provide for strengthening of academic support to Block Resource Centers(BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centers (CRCs) through availability of subject specific resource persons for teacher training, resource persons for inclusive education and MIS coordinators.

Along with this numbers of reforms have been made in teacher education as well. The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) prepared the National Curriculum Framework of Teacher Education (2009) in the light of the NCF, 2005 and the principles laid down in the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009. The Framework has highlighted the specific objectives, broad areas of study in terms of theoretical and practical learning, and curricular transaction and assessment strategies for the various initial teacher education programmes as well as in-service teacher training programmes. Implementation of 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009' would also lead to qualitative improvements in teacher education and school system. The provisions have been made for enforcing standards for training of teachers; essential minimum qualifications; existing teachers not possessing prescribed qualifications to acquire the same within a period of 5 years; maintaining the specified Pupil- Teacher Ratio in each school and vacancy of a teacher shall not exceed 10% of the sanctioned strength in a school established, owned, controlled or substantially financed by the Government. The NCTE in August, 2010 laid down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in classes I to VIII. In addition to the academic and professional

qualifications, every person, in order to be eligible for appointment as a teacher, has to pass a Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) conducted by the appropriate Government. The Government is in the process of revising the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education to meet the qualitative and quantitative challenges in teacher education, especially in the light of the RTE Act.

In-service education aims at the continuous professional growth of the teacher so as to develop in him a positive attitude towards improving his own performance as a teacher. In the present days the horizon of knowledge is expanding at a tremendous pace and today's knowledge becomes outdated tomorrow. If the teachers fail to keep up with the latest knowledge, will be giving yesterday's knowledge to tomorrow's citizens. Therefore, if a teacher is to keep oneself updated with the best and latest information and innovations in their subjects and teaching methods, teachers have to learn throughout their professional life. The in-service education and training programmes attempts precisely for the same. Regarding teacher training National Policy on Education (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. Realizing the importance of such training to teachers and other related personnel, the Government of India has taken positive steps in this regard by establishing District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) , Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) .

Establishing an institute is not enough for achieving the requisite results, but constant review of its performance in various areas and taking corrective actions to achieve the desired goal is of prime importance. DIETs are engaged in various kinds of in-service programme like Special Orientation Programme for Teachers (SOPT), Minimum Levels of Learning's (MLLs), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Tarang Ulhasmai Abhyas Programme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and Principal Orientation Programme for Principals.

Since all in-service education programmes cannot be organized in face to-face modality, especially in view of the numbers involved, distance in-service education should be provided with the help of broadcasting agencies State Council of Education Resource and Training (SCERTs) would be equipped with necessary resources for production of learning materials other than print. Minimum essential equipment to record audio and video programmes would be provided to each SCERT. The comprehensive colleges of education, IASEs, CTEs and DIETs would also be provided production facilities in a phased manner. Experiences

especially those of voluntary organizations should be drawn upon in designing courses, developing materials and modalities for in-service education.

EMERGENCE OF DIET

Various commissions and committees appointed after independence have taken initiative in restoring the Indian education; its indigenous character and universal converge. The Education Commissions (1964-66) strongly pleaded for internal transformation of education of the nation, qualitative improvements in education so that the standards achieved were adequate and kept continually rising and became internationally comparable in a few sectors and the expansions of educational facilities on the basis of manpower needs with accent on equalization of educational opportunities.

The NPE (1986) emphasized that the existing system of teacher education will have to be overhauled. A novel educational institution has been conceived and defined in the NPE (1986). To establish such an institution called DIET is the result of the determination for the improvement of teacher education at elementary level.

As per DIET Guidelines (1989) DIET's were established with the following objectives:

1. To provide highly enriched training to elementary school teachers and non-formal and adult education functionaries.
2. To provide training to the grassroots and personnel of the education system.
3. To provide facilities of qualitative improvement for the professional growth even of the lowest personnel.
4. To provide facilities for the education of the deprived children, adults and other neglected members of the society.
5. To develop educational curriculum, methodology and technology in keeping with the latest advancements.
6. To make available the fruits of development to the lowest level worker without being hampered by distance and expenses within the district.

DIETs will create a feeling of belongingness among the lowest workers of the field, i.e. the elementary teacher. DIETs will create among these people the sense of being cared for and looked after. DIETs will also generate a climate of 'ever welcome' for every worker, who will feel assured that he can consult and receive guidance and solve his problems, which are generally neglected by high officials for whom they are small and routine.

The new structure of DIET envisaged in the NPE (1986) has been a new landmark in the educational system based on the theme of decentralization of education. It shall have far reaching effect on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of the elementary education in the country. Considering the importance of this new concept the investigator felt it fit to discuss the various aspect of the DIET, such as characteristics, mission and role, programmes and activities, functions, linkage.

The NPE (1986) and the subsequent Programme of Action (POA, 1986) signified a new landmark in the educational development in India. The teacher has been paid the highest compliment. The teacher is the principal means for implementing educational programmes and of the organization of education. New roles have been expected from the teachers, like the statement "child centered and activity based process of learning should be adopted at the primary stage, has its implication that the teachers instead of acting as a disseminators of information would act more as mediator of learning. The emphasis is shifted from teaching to learning. Similarly, the concepts of equality of opportunity to all, not only in access, but also in the conditions for success," this brings another important role for teacher. There are other aspects also wherein teaching is now to provide prestigious leadership roles in policy implementation.

The new dimension of teacher's role arising out of policy thrusts necessitates in-service education for teachers so that proposed reforms are understood by teachers and properly implemented. An education system has to be geared to the changing demands of the society. No system of education, however comprehensive in content and terms can meet these changing demands, unless the teacher, who is the driving force behind it, is fully equipped with academic and professional competency. Therefore, efforts must be made to reorient the system of teacher education from time to time. Considering these, NPE 1986 recommended opening of institutions at district level known as DIET, to provide the necessary support for the professional development of elementary teachers.

The functions of DIET, as spelt out in the POA (1986) are as follows:

- 1 Training and orientation of the following target groups:
 - Elementary school teachers (both pre-service and in-service education).
 - Head master, Heads of school Complexes and officers of Educational Department, Instructors and supervisor of Non-formal Education (NFE) and Adult Education (AE).
 - Members of DBE and Village Education Committees (VECs), Community leaders youth and other volunteers who wish to work as education activists.

2. Academic and resource support to the elementary and adult education systems in the district in other ways e.g. by (i) extension activities and interaction with the field, (ii) provision of service of a resources and learning centre for teachers and instructors, (iii) development of locally relevant materials, teaching aids, evaluation tools etc., and (iv) serving as an evaluation centre for elementary schools and programmes of NFE/AE.
3. Action research and experimentation to deal with specific problems of the district in achieving the objectives in the areas of elementary and adult education.

DIET AT A GLANCE [As per DIET Guideline, Ministry of Human Resource Development, (MHRD,1989)]

To carry out the functions, following academic branches have been recommended by the guidelines from MHRD (1989).

- 1) Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) branch
- 2) Work Experience (WE) branch
- 3) District Resource Unit (DRU) for adult Education and Non-formal Education.
- 4) In-service programme, Field interaction and Innovation Co-ordination (IFIC) branch
- 5) Curriculum, Material Development and Evaluation (CMDE) branch
- 6) Educational Technology (ET) branch
- 7) Planning and Management (PM) branch

As mentioned above, each branch has specific functions in its own field so as to achieve the basic objectives. Here Investigator has concentrated on fourth branch i.e. IFIC Branch. The IFIC branch is working in three fields i.e. In-service programme, Field interaction and Innovation Co-ordination. Here investigator has concentrated on in-service programme.

Establishing an institute is not enough for achieving the requisite results, but constant review of its performance in various areas, and taking corrective actions to achieve the desired goal is of prime importance. Review of related literature showed that more number of studies have been carried out in in-service teacher education but very few at primary level. Studies at primary level focused on the different aspects such as infrastructure of DIETs, human resource, effectiveness of programmes and functions of DIET as spelt out in the guideline. Therefore, it is important that studies are conducted from time to time mainly to assess the achievements of DIETs in various related fields. One such study was conducted by authors about DIETs of Gujarat State with reference to in-service teacher education. The main

objective of the present study was- to analyze the in-service training programmes in terms of its objective, its relevance to the emerging educational contexts, its content, its mode of presentation.

METHODOLOGY

For the present study authors used survey method and used multistage sampling method. To collect data a questionnaires were prepared for Teachers, Resource Persons and Teacher Educators of DIETs. An opinionnaire and interview schedule were prepared for the teachers, observation schedule was prepared for checking quality of training programmes. For preparing tools, authors identified major areas to be covered and then items were prepared on each area. Tools were also sent to experts for validation. Data were collected with the help of above tools with the permission of higher authority, i.e. Gujarat Council of Education Research and Training (GCERT). The data collected by questionnaire was analyzed with the help of frequencies and percentages. Some of the data of questionnaire were also analyzed through content analysis techniques. The data collected by opinionnaire were computed with the help of frequencies, percentages and Chi-square. The data collected by observation schedule and interview were analyzed through content analysis techniques.

MAJOR OUTCOMES

The findings obtained from this study regarding the objectives of in-service training programmes report that objectives of the in-service training programmes have been clearly mentioned in invitation letter and teachers have clarity about the objectives and according to objectives teachers prepared themselves in advance for attending in-service training programmes. Teachers also added that time allotted for in-service training programmes was adequate and duration was also enough for the attainment of objectives of the programmes. Similar findings regarding objectives were reported by Indian and foreign studies. [Blunck (1993), Chadwick (1999), Richmond (2002), Stewart (2000), Baker (2001), Castenda (2002), Butala (1987), Ramana (1997), Gupta (1998), Rao (2003), Shajoin (1996), Yadav (1999), Swaminathan (2002)]

The findings with respect to the in-service training programmes and its relevance to the emerging educational contexts showed that lecturers of DIETs made efforts to organize in-service training programmes, which were related to the theme of emerging educational contexts and majority of lecturers used ICT in training programmes and gave importance to life skill and other emerging contexts. Teachers also responded that in-service training programmes were able to cope with emerging trends of education. Gupta (1998) found that knowledge of teachers in emerging educational concerns of primary education improved

significantly. This result was also supported by Chadwick (1999) indicating that integration of arts can be a powerful teaching tool for teachers and an interesting way for students to learn. Ray (2001) also indicated that information and communication technology works significantly and teachers reported a change in teaching while they used technology. This shows that in-service training programmes were organized with different themes and importance was given to emerging educational context, so that teachers became aware of emerging trends in education. While contradictory results were found by Butala (1987), which indicated that very few training colleges focused on areas like educational technology, management and modern trends in education.

The findings obtained from the study about the content of in-service training programmes showed that no definite conclusion could be derived regarding the improvement in the content of in-service training programmes, while resource persons opined that they discussed about the difficult points of content matter and it was observed that modules regarding the content were given in in-service training programmes, which were informative, content was nicely presented and well organized. Butala (1987) arrived at a similar type of finding which reported that major achievement of in-service training programmes was update in the teacher and content area. In the present study, teachers also responded that new concepts were well explained in in-service training programmes. Shajoin (1996) supported this view, which showed that teachers felt that the programme had helped them to acquire the necessary knowledge regarding the content. Yadav (1999) arrived at a similar type of findings, which reported that teachers expressed their views that they had clarity about the objectives up to extent; course content met the training needs comprehensible to some extent. This shows that in-service training programmes were organized with different content matter and modules were given related to content matter and course content met the training needs.

Views regarding the mode of presentation in in-service training programmes showed that resource persons and teachers felt that there was a scope for the discussion and fruitful discussion took place and opportunities were given to teachers for presenting their questions. Along with this, in response to question regarding teaching method, teachers opined that lecture method was mostly used, followed by lecture cum discussion method, while project method and demonstration method were used sometimes. It was also observed in observation of training programmes that mostly lecture method was used for teaching but it was also fact that resource persons present their ideas very nicely even though they used lecture method. This result was supported by Yadav (1999) indicated the lecture method was mostly used in in-service training programmes (i.e. 98.4 percent), this was followed by lecture cum

discussion method (47.4 percent). These findings further strengthen the findings of Butala (1987), which stated that the main modes employed in the in-service training programmes were lectures, seminars and workshops. But this result was contradictory with result obtained by opinionnaire of teachers, questionnaire for lectures and observation of training programmes. In opinionnaire, teachers responded that resource persons and lecturers of DIETs used different method of teaching. It was also observed that lecturers of DIETs and resource persons used content related teaching aids, i.e. Teaching Learning Material, Overhead Projector, charts etc. This finding was supported by Butala (1987). But it was seen in the observation that lecturers and resource persons was used teaching aids but they were not using ICT based or modern teaching aids. i. e. computer, video clips, virtual tours, power point presentation, animation etc. In connection with this finding Kishore (1998) found that primary teachers prefer mostly the learning by doing method for in-service training programmes.

It can be seen that in-service education is very well designed through various programmes theoretically. DIETs have tried to orient the teachers at various levels. Findings of few studies also support that such in-service programme have positive impact to classroom teaching. So it is recommended that as per need of society and emerging social context, a proper programme of in-service education be designed and implemented for better quality of education.

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