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IMPACT OF IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL IN SINDH PROVINCE

Abstract

The aim of the study was to find out impact of in- service teacher training at elementary level in Hyderabad Division. The study was descriptive type survey in nature to know strengths and weaknesses of in-service training provided to the teachers. A questionnaire comprised on basic concepts of in- service teacher training like value and importance, methods, training criteria, problems and suggestions to improve professional competency of teachers were developed and administered for getting required information from respective respondents. A sample of 462 respondents was randomly selected from 40 government schools (boys/girls), both from urban and rural areas including Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (Male/ Female) of Hyderabad district. It included 2 (1+1) principals (Male/Female), 20 (10+10) master trainers (Male/Female) of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education, 40 (20+20) school head teachers (Male/Female) and 400 (200+200) in-service master trained teachers (Male/Female) of the above schools. An interview schedule was also developed and administered to know the opinion of Director, Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing, Sindh. Data were collected from personally from the respective respondents and analyzed on frequency percentage and means score method. The major findings of the study drawn from the analysis of data were that in-service training has positive impact on professional development of the teachers. It helped to improve various

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pedagogical skills of teachers. It was also found that short duration, non-availability of standardized textbooks, lack of coordination among training institutions, lack of transport, security and residential, shortage of physical and instructional facilities, no institutionalized arrangement for providing regular training to teachers were the major problems to be solved on priority basis for improving professional development of teachers.

Keywords

Education, Teacher Education, In-service Teacher Education and Training, Quality of Teachers

Introduction

Education plays vital role for uplifting life style of the people. It is a continuous process through which knowledge; skills and experiences of individuals are transferred from one generation to the next generation. It is a key for opening new venues for the economic development of the country to face the challenges of modern world.

Only educated and highly skilled workforce equipped with modern skills can compete and benefit from exploiting the opportunities created by globalization. Like other countries of the world, in our country, efforts were going on at all levels to improve the quality of education by launching pre-service and in-service training programs.

In this regards National Education Policy (1998) said that:-

“It is a fact that academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competency and skills of teaching, commitment of teachers have direct impacts on the teaching-learning process. The quality concerns of teacher education relate to policy formulation and planning, development and management of teacher education

programs, provision of adequate infrastructure to training institutions, pre-service and continuous in-service education of teacher educators, regular enrichment of curriculum, content, methods, evaluation techniques, teaching aids and other teacher related resources” Govt. of Pakistan (1998-2010, pp. 46-47).

Teaching is a profession, demanding skills and competency to teach to the future generation, reaching up to the demands and expectations of the society and persons going to adopt this profession be training through the process of teaching and learning.

It is the teacher education, as described by (Iqbal. (2005,p.3), is in fact, is at the same time an art, a skill, and a quality to direct the trainee teachers in teaching-learning process, and to equip them with all necessary skills and knowledge in order to perform their duties in an organized way, which in future they are expected to be assigned. It occupies the most important place in any education system of a country.

Owing to induction of information technology in every walk of life especially in the field of education and training , rapidly changes is going on in teaching and learning and only basic knowledge and teaching skills are not sufficient meeting the demands of the time and various research studies stressed further training to be provided to the teachers.

Niazi. (2005, p.33) stated that it is a fact that due to induction of information technology in the field of education and training, teachers must be provided in-service training so that they would be able to accept the responsibility according to the change in the assignment and location of work. It is further added that in-service training may be provided on job, or refresher courses, orientation, workshop, seminars and conferences etc.

In-service education of teachers (INSET), as it has been further described by Rao. (2002, p.12) *that in-service education is a continuous training of teachers, commences after joining profession of teaching, which leads to the improvement of professional competence of their careers.*

Similarly, Anees (2005, p.71) stated that in-service education is designed to promote the continuous development of the teacher after he enters the teaching profession by providing a planned and systematic instruction within an educational setting. The need for further study is directly related to the ability of a teacher to perform his teaching task. The more the nature of his role is changes, the more frequently the teacher must receive in-service education. An experienced teacher may need such added training because of a change in his assignment, location of work or socio-economic composition of the population.

Similarly, while highlighting value and importance of professional development of teachers, Farooq. (2006) described that highly qualified and trained teachers have positive impact on students' achievement, as they know different teaching styles and have the ability to impart education in better ways than the untrained teachers.

Moreover, AEPAM. (2014) also pointed out that training had positive impact on the performance of trainees because it had increased knowledge and skills related to their job requirements i.e. classroom management, internal efficiency, behavioral management in school organization, developing effective learning skills, team management, human resource management, motivational techniques, monitoring or evaluation techniques.

Review of Literature

Sindh province with its 42.4 million populations (UNDP. 2011) stands second largest province of Pakistan. The province has been divided into 6 divisions and 23 districts and Hyderabad division, an administrative division of the Sindh province, comprised on six districts i.e Dadu , Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Matiari, Tando Allahyar and Tando Muhammad Khan districts.

Furthermore, Hyderabad district with its 4.5 million population, was further sub-divided into Hyderabad City, Hyderabad Rural, Latifabad and Qasimabad talukas (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyderabad_District,_Sindh). Schooling system in public sector of Hyderabad district is comprised on total 1080 (904 primary schools, 81(55boys &26 girls) middle/elementary schools, 82 secondary and 13 higher secondary schools), where 169,467 students were taught by 8633 teachers. Overall literacy rate of the district was 69% (75% male and 62%), Govt of Sindh. (2012).

In Sindh, there are total 69 teacher training institutions providing pre and in-service training to the teachers at different levels. In public sector, there is a Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing, a Provincial Institute for Teacher Education, 25 (14 M+11F) including Government Elementary Colleges of Education including, 2 Govt. In-service Teachers Training Centers, 2 Regional Education Extension Centers, 6 Divisional Educational Technology Resource Centers, one District Educational Technology Resource Centre and one Govt. Agro- Technical Teachers Training Centre. Moreover, there are 5 Govt. Colleges of Education, 12 Govt. High Schools and 4 universities' education departments provide teacher education at graduate and postgraduate levels to train teachers at various levels (PITE. 2009, pp.8-9).

In Hyderabad district, at elementary level, followings are the main training institutions playing vital role to improve teachers' professional competency:-

a) *Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing, Sindh*

It is located at located at Jamshoro, near Hyderabad city, responsible for developing curriculum and provision of in-service training to teachers, along with looking after the schools for disabled children. It is an executive and administrative body, controls 11 in-service training institutes, 32 pre-service training institutes including 25 Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education, 3 Govt. Colleges of Education and 15 teacher training institutions, responsible for the provision of pre-service and in-service training to teachers at various levels in Sindh province. It also undertakes curriculum development in collaboration with the Curriculum Wing (Federal Ministry of Education) and Sindh Textbook Board in textbook development. (<http://www.bcews.gos.pk>).

b) *Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education*

In Hyderabad city, there were 2 Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (M/F) have been established, responsible for provision of pre-service courses like PTC/CT/OT and various in-service training courses to the teachers up to elementary level. These GECEs are under the administrative, academic and financial control of Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing Sindh. INSET is not a compulsory component, but the provincial and district governments make their efforts to provide in-service training at elementary level through these teacher training institutions. These institutions are the arms of PITE, Sindh to carry out the trainings for in-service teachers in the district (<http://www.bcews.gos.pk>).

Professional Development of Teachers

Professional development of the teachers refers to all those training activities provided to the teachers for enhancing their professional competency. Such activities may be called in-service education, individual development, professional development, staff development, continuing or lifelong education. It is the professional development of the teachers which helps to up update their knowledge, skills for meeting the demands of the time to achieve the required objectives of the education in due course of time. OECD. (2005, p.49) described that professional development of teachers is:-

“Professional development includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Successful programs involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers’ learning communities”.

In Sindh province, like other provinces of Pakistan, since independence efforts were going on to improve professional development of teachers by launching various in-service teacher training programs at all levels, but due to many reasons the required objectives were not achieved so far. It included budgetary and financial constraints of teacher training institutions, acute shortage of facilities, such as buildings, equipment, furniture, teaching aids, library books and other reading materials, no institutionalized arrangement for providing regular training to teachers, irrelevant curricula, staff absenteeism, short duration of in-service training courses, lack of research in the field of teacher education, corruption during recruitment and selection of teachers, no coordination between education departments and teacher training institutions were the major

problems creating hindrances on the way of improving professional competency of teachers, needs to be solved on priority basis.

Objectives of the Study

The study objectives of the study were to:

- To carry out documentary analysis of in-service training programs conducted by Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing, Sindh
- To assess impact of in-service teacher training.
- To analyze the skills of the teachers in relation with the national professional standards for teachers.
- To find out problems of in-service teacher training.
- To suggest suitable recommendations for the improvement of professional competency of teachers.

Research Questions of the Study

The present study was designed to answer the following questions:

- What is the impact of in-service teacher training?
- How much skills mentioned in national professional standards do the teachers possess?
- What are the problems of in-service training?

Method and Procedure of the Study

The design of the study was descriptive type survey in nature. Research instruments (questionnaires and interview schedules) were used for data collection. All the research tools were pilot tested before administration for data collection to the respective respondents. Director BoC, Principals including master trainers of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (Male/Female), school heads and in-service trained teachers of the Government Elementary schools (boys/girls) of Hyderabad district both urban and rural areas were included in the population of the study.

A sample of 462 respondents was taken through convenient sampling technique from 40 (20 boys+20 girls) government elementary schools, both from urban and rural areas including Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (Male/ Female) of Hyderabad district. It included 2 (1M+1F) principals, 20 (10M+10F) master trainers of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education), 40 (20M+20F) school head teachers and 400 (200M+200F) in-service master trained teachers of the above schools. An interview schedule was also developed and administered to know the opinion of Director, Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing, Sindh.

After having reviewed the related literature, a questionnaire consisted of 35 (thirty five) closed plus 5 (five) open ended questions, showing statements of agreement/ disagreement on five point Likert rating scale about finding out impact of in-service training at elementary level was developed and administered to collect information from principals and master trainers of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (M/F), school head teachers and in-service trained teachers of Govt. Elementary schools (boys/girls) of Hyderabad district. Furthermore, to know the opinion of Director, Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing,

Sindh, regarding to find out impact of in-service teacher training at elementary level, a written structured interview schedules consisted on 5 (five) open ended questions were developed. Both the research instruments were personally administered to the sample, therefore, the return rate was 100%.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, principals, master trainers, school head teachers and teachers of elementary schools' responses were calculated according to likert scale such as strongly agree 5, agree 4, neutral 3, disagree 2 and strongly disagree 1. Data collected through different research instruments (questionnaires and interview schedules) were properly tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical tools in terms of frequency percentage and means score method to work out overall average score of each element in the light of objectives of the study for drawing out findings, conclusions and recommendations. It was expected that the study would produce such results showing clear picture of the impact of teacher training at elementary level.

Later on results were presented on a consolidated table to find out impact of in-service teacher training at elementary level.

Results and Findings

As a result of the data collection and data analysis, following were the major findings:-

i) Views of Principals Regarding Impact of In-service Training

It was general perception that in-service training provide competency of the teachers, therefore evidences were collected from the principals of the Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education on the basis of their services rendered by them while performing their responsibilities in their respective institutions. It was found that 80% principals of elementary college viewed that in-service training enhanced human growth and professional development of the teachers. 75% and 70% principals had opinion that in-service training enhanced professional competency of teachers regarding instructional planning and strategies and assessment respectively. 65% and 60% principals agreed that in-service training enhanced pedagogical skill and learning environment. 60% and 55% principals viewed that in-service training was useful for enhancing subject matter knowledge and information communication technology

ii) Views of Head Teachers Regarding Impact of In-service Training

It was found that 81% head teachers viewed that in-service training increased learning environment. 76% and 73% head teachers had opinion that in-service training enhanced capacity of teachers regarding use of information communication technology and budget matter knowledge respectively. 70% head teachers had opinion that in-service training enhanced competency of teachers regarding human growth. 67% and 60% head teachers viewed that in-service training enhanced understanding and instructional planning/strategies and assessment and pedagogical skills of the teachers

iii) Views of Master Trainers Regarding Impact of In-service Training

The results of the study showed that 77% and 76% master trainers had opinion that in-service training enhanced competency level of teachers regarding professional development and instructional planning and strategies respectively. 72% and 71% master trainers viewed that in-service training enhanced competency regarding assessment and use of information communication technology. Similarly 70% master trainers said in-service training increased pedagogical skills human growth and learning environment. Hence 64% master trainers had opinion that in-service training had increased subject knowledge of the teachers.

iv) Views of Teachers Regarding Impact of In-service Training

It was revealed from the results of the study that 82% and 81% teachers had opinion that in-service training enhanced competency of teachers regarding instructional planning, strategies and professional development respectively. Similarly, 78% and 71% teachers viewed that training provided learning environment and increased subject knowledge. 65% and 69% teachers had opinion that in-service training enhanced human growth and pedagogical skills of the teachers which is very important for their professional development

v) Views of Director, Bureau of Curriculum and Extension (BoC), Sindh, Regarding Impact of In-service Training

The Director, Bureau of Curriculum and Extension (BoC), Sindh, had the opinion regarding impact of in-service training for improving professional competency of teachers, that they had taken serious steps for improvement of teacher trainings, which included preparation of PC-I, dissemination of National standards

among teacher trainers, so that they would be able to consider while providing training to the teachers. However, they had been facing problems which included budgetary problems and proper political will power, which creates hindrances in conducting research. They were of the view that by motivational techniques, they would be able to overcome these problems.

Discussion and Conclusion

On the basis of findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn;

It was concluded that in-service teacher training has positive impact on professional development of the teachers. It helped to improve pedagogical skills which include motivating students for taking keen interest in studies, enhanced capability to use a variety of teaching methods for achieving good results, providing capabilities to use of audio-visual aids and new instructional technology to facilitate teaching learning process teachers for management of classrooms, skills for properly maintaining in-service training enabled the teachers discipline, psychology of students and to solve students' problems with proper guiding and counseling. In-service training helped teachers for bringing change in attitude, improved communication skills, apply different evaluative techniques for measuring students' performance, raising students' achievement (results) in respective subjects, enabled teachers to achieve instructional objectives successfully and prepared the teacher for lesson planning, so that quality of education can be provided to the students at school level.

Problems of In-Service Teacher Training

There are many problems in the in-service training, which include short duration, non-availability of appropriate standardized

textbooks /modules, lack of coordination among training institutions, out-moded method of teaching and evaluation, lack of professional interest and enthusiasm of teachers, lacking of required skills to bring change in trainees, lack of monitoring, irregularity of trainee, lack of transport, security and residential, political interferences and malpractices, shortage of competent teaching staff, shortage of physical and instructional facilities, no institutionalized arrangement for providing regular training to teachers, etc.

Recommendations

Keeping in view the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made for improving professional competency of teachers: -

1. It was recommended that in-service training may be arranged for the teachers considering various levels of competencies required for professional development of teachers.
2. It is also recommended that training may be designed in such manners that every individual teacher may be able to avail this opportunity for professional development.
3. It is recommended that efforts may be carried out at all levels to solve the problems on priority basis, creating hindrances for improving professional development of teachers.

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