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SUGGESTIVE MEASURES FOR THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT OF IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES

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ABSTRACT

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of in-service teachers is vital to quality teacher education. Countries world over are adopting different policies, strategies, methods, techniques and modalities to help their teachers to engage in fruitful training programmes. Keeping in view various shortcomings in the training programmes, continuing lifelong professional learning of teachers is given prime importance. The present study throws light on various suggestive measures to enhance the quality of training programmes. A sample of 4 Principals and 51 Teacher Educators of DIETs from four Districts namely, Shimla, Solan, Bilaspur and Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh and further, a sample of 60 head teachers and 480 in-service teachers of upper primary schools was also selected from four Districts namely, Shimla, Solan, Bilaspur and Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh. The survey method of research was used and self-developed questionnaires were used for the present study. It has been found in the present study that principals and teacher educators suggested to utilise the feedback for improving future training programmes, emphasized that training must focus on e-learning, focussed on making provisions for online training sessions for in-service teachers and avoidance of the repeated teachers for the training to enhance quality in the in-service teacher training programmes conducted by DIETs. Furthermore, head teachers and in-service teachers suggested that during in-service teacher training programmes importance should be given to all the subjects of upper primary classes and if possible, training must be conducted during holidays so that their teaching schedule is not disturbed. Moreover, it was also suggested that current problems in teaching-learning process must be highlighted in the training programmes.

Keywords: Continuing Professional Development (CPD), District Institutes of Education & Training (DIETs), Himachal Pradesh, In-service Teacher Training Programmes, Quality Enhancement, Suggestive Measures.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the pedestal of the education system. Teachers change the lives, inspire dreams and push the limits of human potential. A teacher's job is to nurture, teach and raise students to become useful for the society. So, the training programmes for teachers are the need and necessity of the present hour. These programmes are integral to the education system as they keep the teachers up to date with respect to knowledge of their subjects, methods and techniques of teaching and use of new technologies in education. These programmes also help in improving the professional skills of the teachers, improve their performances, develop positive attitude and behaviour towards teaching profession. New Education Policy (2020) has also given the importance to continuing education of school teachers because education is the lifelong process and emphasized that training programmes in teaching profession are essential. Various agencies at national level, state level and district level play eminent role in training teachers with the perspective of quality enhancement in the teaching learning process as a whole.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Yazdani (2016) in a critical study on professionalism among teacher educators of District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) in Delhi found that most of the teacher educators and principals agreed that the teacher educators attended the training programmes related to their subjects organized by different organizations which helped in the upgradation and development of teaching methodology of different subjects. Teacher Educators of District Institute of Education and Training, played a very essential role in elementary education at District level by training pre-service as well in-service and for the quality development of elementary education and it was suggested that the professionalism of teacher educators of DIETs should be very high.

Suleiman et al. (2017) in a paper presentation on impact of teachers' capacity building on students' academic performance in secondary schools concluded that training and re-training of teachers was an essential factor for determining students' success and its importance could not be over-emphasized. The teachers who had acquired workshop programmes were more equipped and thus, had the intellectual capacity on the impact of adequate knowledge on their students in the classroom which would in turn have positive influence on students' academic performance.

Tyagi and Mishra (2017) conducted a study on in-service education of school teachers in India and found the following challenges: (i) non-availability of infrastructure and facilities; (ii) lack of a uniform policy framework for in-service teacher education; (iii) majority of teachers remain out of the orbit of in-service education/training and; (iv) most of the in-service activities are irrelevant to the needs of teachers and does not care to know about how a teacher implements his/her enhanced knowledge and skills in the classroom.

Khan and Jahan (2018) in their study on teacher educators' need of e-training in India found that: (i) e-learning was essential for integration of technology and e-learning environment could be a continuous process of teacher development; (ii) a general teacher training and e-training can go hand in hand for an optimum teaching-learning environment and achievement of the objectives and; (iii) e-training was urgent and essential for all modern instructors, teachers, teacher educators, researchers and managers, as education without technology is certainly not effective in the present era.

Bangan (2019) in a study on the effectiveness of in-service training to the professional growth of teachers found that in-service trainings were indeed of great advantage to teachers for the improvement of their teaching career. The development of professionalism does not happen overnight but rather a long and continuous process to achieve success. The activities and topics which were to be included during in-service teacher training programs should be appropriate and useful so that these will contribute positive outcomes in the teaching and learning process. Such programs must be planned with utmost care to be able to achieve the target of becoming relevant in aiming for advancement and breakthrough when participants most especially the members of the teaching force go back and proceed to their respective work destinations and transfer to the learners what they have gained in trainings they have attended.

Singh et al. (2019) in their study on professional development of in-service teachers in India found that: (i) professional development programme of in-service teachers was important and needed; (ii) most importantly, there was need to have a well-planned in-service education programme with clearly defined objectives of growth and improvement of instruction and leadership skills; (iii) in-service education should be recognized as a part of institutional or organizational activities designed by government for staff development and motivation; (iv) organizers of in-service education should focus on job related tasks that were real, practical oriented and relevant to the participants; (v) deliberate efforts should be made by the various institutions to provide adequate tables and chairs, classrooms, laboratories and boarding facilities for participants to facilitate effective instruction and; (vi) efforts should be directed to assist the participants to work in small groups and learn from each other rather than focusing on information dissemination that was not applicable in practical classroom setting or environment.

Siddiqui and Mughal (2021) in a study on teacher training in Pakistan found that teacher training is an integral part of teacher education. There are some serious problems with teacher training like attracting suitable individuals for teaching, equipping them with adequate and correct skills, lack of resources in teacher training institutions, demotivation among teachers to carry out their work effectively, unequal distribution of skilled and productive teachers, dual training system etc. However, pragmatic steps such as investment, eradication of corruption, strengthening institutes will help revamp teacher training.

Singh and Sinha (2022) in a study on the impact of in-service teachers training on school teachers found that there is a positive impact of in-service teachers training in developing knowledge, understanding and skills of teachers for managing classroom environment, maintaining discipline, interacting students by asking questions and getting prompt replies and evaluating students through class tests. Hence, training programmes had positive impact in certain areas of teaching/ classroom transaction but in certain areas as viz. method of teaching and handling of audio-visual aids are still out of this positive impact.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is of immense significance as it focuses on the quality enhancement of the training programmes. Learner has always been the centre of teaching learning process, now whether it is a student or a teacher that is a secondary issue. Learning is a lifelong process and in-service training provides teachers with an opportunity to learn specific skills, innovative techniques and new instructional approaches that they can use in their teaching. Since, teacher is the centre of training hence, their suggestions are of prime importance which can really bring qualitative changes in the training programmes to pursue better results for future trainings. This study brings to the limelight the suggestions offered by the DIETs functionaries, head teachers and in-service upper primary teachers for the improvement in the quality of training programmes.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the suggestions suggested by DIETs functionaries, head teachers and in-service upper primary teachers regarding in-service teacher training programmes.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective as mentioned above the survey method of research was used in the present study.

Sample

The sample consisted of 4 principals and 51 Teacher Educators from the four DIETs namely, Shimla, Solan, Bilaspur and Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh was selected purposively. Further, 60 head teachers and 480 upper primary in-service teachers from the four districts namely, Shimla, Solan, Bilaspur and Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh was selected through random sampling technique.

Research Tool

The questionnaires were self-developed to gain a comprehensive and authentic information about the training programmes. The validity and reliability of the questionnaires was also assured before administering it.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to the principals and teacher educators of DIETs and the selected head teachers and the in-service teachers of upper primary schools. The respondents were given detailed instructions as how to respond to the various items of the questionnaires.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

For the present study, the obtained information was tabulated and organized in the form of frequencies and was further analysed in the form of percentages.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE RESULTS

I. The collected data from the DIETs functionaries regarding the suggestions for the quality enhancement of in-service teacher training programmes organised by them is analysed, tabulated and interpreted as follows:

Table-1

**Suggestions for the Quality Enhancement of In-service Teacher Training Programmes
Organised by DIETs**

Sr. No.	Suggestions to Enhance Quality in Training Programmes	Principals (N=4)		Teacher Educators (N=51)	
		F	%	F	%
1.	Current issues of Education must be highlighted in the training programmes	4	100	42	82.35
2.	Ensure hundred per cent attendance of teacher trainees	4	100	44	86.27
3.	Feedback should be utilized for improving future training programmes	4	100	50	98.04
4.	Training must focus on e-learning	4	100	49	96.08
5.	Repetition of the teachers for the training should be avoided.	4	100	47	92.16
6.	Practical oriented training must be conducted	4	100	45	88.24
7.	Provision of online training session for in-service teachers	4	100	48	94.12
8.	Any Other suggestion:	-	-	-	-

Table 1 indicates that all the principals and 98.04 per cent, 96.08 per cent, 94.12 per cent, 92.16 per cent, 88.24 per cent, 86.27 per cent and 82.35 per cent teacher educators suggested that feedback should be utilized for improving future training programmes, training must focus on e-learning, provision of online training sessions for in-service teachers, repetition of the teachers for the training should be avoided, practical oriented training must be conducted, 100 per cent attendance of teacher trainees and highlighting current issues of education respectively, were the major suggestions to enhance quality in teacher training programmes by DIETs.

II. The data collected from the head teachers and in-service teachers regarding the suggestions for the quality enhancement of in-service teacher training programmes is analysed, tabulated and interpreted as follows:

Table-2

Suggestions for the Quality Enhancement of In-service Teacher Training Programmes

Sr. No.	Suggestions	Head Teachers (N=60)		In-service Teachers (N=480)	
		F	%	F	%
1.	Current problems in teaching-learning process must be highlighted in the training programmes	50	83	382	80
2.	Training must be conducted during holidays	52	87	404	84
3.	Intimation about the training should be few days prior to the training	41	68	334	70
4.	Training must focus on e-learning	49	82	365	76
5.	Importance should be given to all the subjects of upper primary classes	51	85	426	89
6.	Training should be more practical and less theoretical	46	77	344	72
7.	Provision of online training session for head teachers/in-service teachers	43	72	329	69
8.	Any Other	-	-	-	-

The table 2 shows that 89 per cent in-service teachers and 85 per cent head teachers suggested that importance should be given to all the subjects of upper primary classes. Further, 87 per cent, 83 per cent, 82 per cent, 77 per cent and 72 per cent head teachers and 84 per cent, 80 per cent, 76 per cent, 72 per cent and 69 per cent in-service teachers suggested that training must be conducted during holidays, current problems in teaching learning process must be highlighted in the training programmes, training must focus on e-learning, training should be more practical and less theoretical and provision of online training session should be there for in-service teachers respectively. Lastly, 70 percent in-service teachers and 68 percent head teachers suggested to intimate about the training few days prior to the training. Singh et al. (2019) also supported the above suggestion and stated that in-service education should focus on practical oriented tasks.

CONCLUSION

It is a very true notion that only a wearer knows where the shoe pinches. Therefore, the Principals and teacher educators of DIETs suggested to utilise feedback for improving future training programmes, emphasized that training must focus on e-learning, focussed on making provisions for online training sessions for in-service teachers and stressed on avoiding the repeated teachers for the training to enhance quality in the in-service teacher training programmes conducted by DIETs. Furthermore, head teachers and in-service teachers suggested that during in-service teacher training programmes importance should be given to all the subjects of upper primary classes and if possible, training must be conducted during holidays. Moreover, it was also suggested that current problems in teaching-learning process must be highlighted in the training programmes so that the problems may be solved.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Training programmes are of immense significance in the education system. In the technological revolving world, it becomes essential that the training programmes should also be technology based in nature. During the time of pandemic, technology helped in making impossible possible, as online trainings became an important part of teacher education. Feedback of the trainers must be utilised in an effective way to bring fruitful results in training programmes. Each and every teacher is an asset of the education hence, equal opportunities should be given to all the teachers to avail the benefit of trainings. Training should not be restricted to few subjects like mathematics and Science only rather, languages such as English, Hindi and Sanskrit are also equally important because they are the means of communication and should also be given due consideration in the training programmes. Schedule of the training should be such that the teaching of the teachers is not disturbed preferably, training schedule should be set in and around the holidays taking into consideration the convenience of the teachers. Current problems in teaching-learning process must be discussed and ways and means to find solution of the problems should also be sort out in the training programmes.

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