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## IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROGRAM IN TEACHING PROFESSION

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**Abstract:** Education is a dynamic process. The various aspects of education are continuously changing. The Teachers, a significant and essential pillar of our education system, should remain conscious and update with every changing situation of their professional field. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers has become an essential part of their profession. Higher education is an important segment of the educational field because it opens a broader perspective of life. The importance of CPD for teachers of Higher education lies in the fact that it helps them to improve their professional and instructional practices. Tripura, a small state of north east region of India, has good literacy rate and its higher education background is also strong with diverse nature of programs. This paper intends to find out the impact and benefits of different CPD programs among the teachers of higher education in Tripura. Effectiveness of different platforms of CPD and attitude of teachers towards CPD are also be investigated by the researchers.

**Key words:** Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Higher education, Impact, attitude, benefits, effectiveness, Tripura.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a pre-requisite for the development of a country. It is a well-established fact that it is mainly through education that people can be made to develop an in-depth awareness, favourable attitudes, values, participate in effective decision making and develop capabilities which help to contribute the societal welfare. The teacher is the backbone of the education system and is the architect of society. The progress of an organization depends upon the quality of its teachers. Continuous professional development is the processes and learning activities professionals undertake to enhance their knowledge, skills, competence, and expertise. It records what professionals learn, experience, and apply in their field.

Instead of being reactive and passive, teachers who engage in continuous professional development become proactive and apply the newly acquired skills and knowledge to teach more efficiently. They attend conferences, workshops, online training classes, or e-learning courses to develop themselves professionally. The importance of higher education cannot be denied for shaping the civilized nations. Higher education plays central role in the training and provision of leaders for different spheres of life including government and other professions. The economic growth of any country is closely linked with the system of higher education which provides educated and skilled manpower for the national economy. Teacher is backbone of any institution including institutions of higher education if they have to materialize their visions and missions. The effectiveness of

higher education institutions is largely dependent on the performance of teachers. For this reason, teachers must be trained and developed so that they may perform their duties efficiently and effectively.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Continuous Professional Development is very important for the qualitative development of teachers in their professional field. It enhances the responsibilities, passion and dedication of teachers towards the profession. CPD is necessary for the teachers of all levels but it is most necessary for the teachers of higher education. The various advantages of CPD are as follows:

### **CPD develops superior skills in organizing and time management**

Apart from teaching, teachers spend a large part of their time developing curriculum, evaluating students, and doing other paperwork. But the advent of **school management software** changed that, and teachers adopted the technology. Continuous professional development will enable them to stay organized and manage their time efficiently. They will also learn to leverage technology to focus more on tutoring and students

### **CPD shows new teaching strategies**

With continuous professional development, teachers discover new teaching strategies and ways. This helps them to identify their students' needs and implement the strategies to teach better. They also understand the areas where they can improve and change their style to be more effective.

### **CPD contributes to better student learning outcomes**

It enables teachers to keep pace with the best practices and latest trends in their profession. It also helps them in crafting personalized and practical lessons for their students.

### **CPD motivates and improves teachers learning curve**

Continuous professional development keeps teachers motivated as they get professional help to become better educators. It allows them to step out of their routine and become a learner. They learn from experienced leaders and experts, which enhances their learning curve and their leadership skills.

### **CPD sets smart, professional goals**

Continuous professional development makes teachers better goal-setters and helps them to set SMART goals. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. With this, educators can define career goals that are realistic and achievable and can be measured by setting a timeline.

### **CPD develops insight into the subjects**

Continuous professional development allows educators to get knowledge and insights into various areas of their subjects.

### **CPD equips teachers and their students for future**

Today's students will need to equip themselves with new technical skills, people skills, and competencies to perform effectively as future professionals and teachers will play a key role in preparing their students for a brave new world.

Tripura, a small state of North-East part of India has a high literacy rate and the higher education segment of the state is also good. Academicians associated with different degree colleges have good academic record but there is a little scope for continuous professional development of the teachers of higher education. Continuous professional development is the need of the hour and all should realise the importance of CPD for professional growth.

### III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

C. Tyagi and P. Misra (2021) showed that CPD is a prerequisite for teacher educators. The importance of CPD for teacher educators lies in the fact that it helps them to improve their professional and instructional practices. B.Vadivel and et.al (2021) investigated the various aspects of EFL teachers professional development through CPD. They studied 83 no's EFL teachers from different socio-economic, multicultural, educational and disciplinary background and found that the teachers have a positive belief in their own CPD.

R. Gartia (2013) showed that CPD helps to facilitate learning and development among educators, specially to learn to cope with new and changing roles and new approaches to teaching. It traces the meaning, principles and importance of CPD in harnessing skills and broadening the knowledge of teacher.

According to S. Noormohammadi (2014), Instructors' ongoing professional development is a long-term professional development process that is important in a dynamic society's need for competent, experienced, and qualified teachers.

S.Shawer (2010) showed that Teachers' professional development involves actions that instructors try after completing their teacher training courses.

J.P Collins and N.P O'Brien (2003) investigated on CPD and found that the phrase "continuing professional development" refers to "intentional, continuous, and systematic procedures and activities intended to boost educators' professional knowledge, abilities, and attitudes so that they may, in turn, increase students' learning"

J.O Afe (1995) in his research paper showed that in the Professional development of teachers is a component of any educational system concerned with preparing and educating teachers to acquire the necessary competencies and abilities in teaching to improve the quality of instructors in their classrooms.

### IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the impact of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program among the teachers of Higher Education in Tripura.
2. To study the attitude of teachers in Higher Educational Institutions of Tripura towards Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program for improvement of their profession.
3. To find out the benefits of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program among teachers in the Higher Educational Institutions of Tripura.
4. To find out the effectiveness of different platforms in Higher Education for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program in Tripura.

### V. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

#### 5.1 Population and Sample

It is survey type research. The study is delimited to the general degree colleges of higher education department of Tripura. The population of the study is comprised with all the teachers at general degree colleges in Tripura. To investigate the attitude of teachers towards CPD, total 100 number of teachers from different degree colleges of Tripura have been selected using simple random sampling method. The teachers include both male and female categories and from all disciplines.

#### 5.2 Tools and Techniques of the study

A self-structured questionnaire was developed by the researchers with 20 statements using 5-point scale and was administered on the teachers to study the impact, attitude and benefits of different CPD programs. Researchers also prepared a table to find out the effectiveness of various continuous professional development program using 5-point scale. Quantitative analysis of data collected from the sample was done using different statistical methods.

## VI: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1 Analysis of impact of CPD related statements

Sl.No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Delivers me different job constraints/restrictions	24%	29%	35%	6%	6%
2.	Takes care about my experience and need	35%	30%	23%	12%	0%
3.	Improve my judgment in education and teaching	35%	59%	6%	0%	0%
4.	Develops teaching skills for effective teaching	41%	41%	6%	12%	0%
5.	Revitalizes teachers' professional needs	29%	59%	6%	6%	0%
6.	Encourages me for quality learning activities	35%	59%	6%	0%	0%
7.	Discusses subjects or topics which are too specialized	41%	35%	18%	6%	0%

Analysis of impact of CPD related statements shows that CPD programs have both positive and negative impact on teachers of higher education in Tripura. 24% teachers strongly agree and 29% teachers agree that CPD programs deliver them different job constraints or restrictions, but 35% teachers remain indifferent in this matter. 59% teachers participated in this survey agree that CPD improve their judgement in education and teaching, revitalizes their professional needs and encourages them for quality learning activities. CPD develops teaching skills for effective teaching, and this is strongly agreed and agreed by 41% teachers in both cases. The subjects or topics that are discussed in CPD programs are too specialized and this is strongly agreed by 41% teachers and agreed by 35% teachers.

Table2 Analysis of Attitude of teachers towards CPD related statements

Sl.No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Wastes my time a lot	12%	6%	0%	35%	47%
2.	Helps me fulfill a specific career path	41%	41%	0%	12%	6%
3.	Broadens my perspective on teaching	35%	35%	18%	12%	0%
4.	Goes through uninteresting subjects or topics	23%	12%	47%	12%	6%
5.	Enhances my learning for pleasure	17%	65%	6%	12%	0%
6.	Increases my self confidence	41%	59%	0%	0%	0%

After analysis of attitude related statements, it was found that most of the teachers have a positive attitude towards continuous professional development program. It was told by the professionals that CPD program wastes time a lot but the present research reveals that 47% teachers strongly disagree and 35% teachers disagree this idea. 65% teachers agree that due to CPD program their learning for pleasure has been enhanced. 59% teachers agree and 41% teachers from different higher educational institutions of Tripura strongly agree that CPD has increased their self-confidence. Most of them agree that CPD broadens their perspective on teaching. Almost 47% teachers do not give their opinion regarding the subjects or topics, either these are interesting or not.

**Table 3: Analysis regarding the Benefits of CPD related statements**

Sl. No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Increases my job opportunities within the teaching profession	30%	28%	18%	18%	6%
2.	Increases my job opportunities outside the teaching profession	18%	36%	12%	34%	0%
3.	Helps me obtain promotion to a higher grade/position	41%	47%	6%	0%	6%
4.	Increases my chances of promotion	35%	59%	6%	0%	0%
5.	Enables me to gain expertise	41%	41%	12%	6%	0%
6.	Boosts my desire to study education to a higher level	35%	41%	6%	12%	6%
7.	Keeps my knowledge up to date	30%	29%	35%	0%	6%

After the analysis of benefits of CPD statements, it was found that CPD programs are highly beneficial to the teachers of higher education in Tripura. 59% teachers agree that CPD increases their chance of promotion in service field. Though 36% teachers agree that CPD increases their job opportunities outside the teaching profession, but 34% teachers disagree this thing. CPD helps teachers to obtain promotion to a higher grade/position which is strongly agreed by 41% teachers and agreed by 47% teachers. 41% teachers agree that CPD enables them to gain expertise and boosts their desire to study education to a higher level. 30% teachers strongly agree, and 29% teachers agree that CPD keeps their knowledge up to date but 35% teachers remain indifferent regarding this matter.

**Table 4: Effectiveness of various continuous professional development programs**

Name	Highly ineffective	Somewhat ineffective	Somewhat effective	Highly effective	Never experienced this type of CPD
Conferences	0%	0%	41%	59%	0%
Lectures	0%	0%	47%	53%	0%
Single workshop	0%	6%	59%	35%	0%
Series of workshops	0%	6%	47%	35%	12%
Faculty Development Program	0%	0%	41%	59%	0%
Demonstration lessons	0%	0%	47%	53%	0%
Seminar	0%	12%	35%	53%	0%
webinar	0%	18%	47%	35%	0%
Action research projects	0%	0%	30%	47%	23%
Collaboration with other colleges/universities	0%	0%	35%	47%	18%
Inter –institutional meetings	0%	0%	35%	53%	12%
Educational trips	0%	0%	41%	53%	6%
Refresher courses	0%	0%	35%	65%	0%
Orientation program	0%	0%	41%	59%	0%
ICT based online program	0%	0%	47%	41%	12%
counseling	0%	0%	35%	47%	18%
Job shadowing	0%	12%	28%	32%	28%
Accredited HE courses/programmes	0%	0%	47%	53%	0%

Table 4 shows the effectiveness of various continuous professional development programs. Maximum types of CPD are highly effective or somewhat effective to the teachers. It was found that conferences, refresher courses, orientation program, seminar are highly effective types of CPD which help the teachers of different degree colleges of Tripura to develop their quality in professional field. Some of the teachers have opinion that seminar, webinar, job shadowing types of CPD are somewhat ineffective for the professional development of teachers. Many of the teachers have never experienced the types of CPD like series of workshops, action research projects, ICT bases online programs etc.

## VII. FINDINGS

1. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs have a great impact upon the Teachers of higher education in Tripura. These develop their teaching skills, enhance their responsibility towards profession and develop a passion for the job.

2. The teachers of higher education in Tripura have a positive attitude towards continuous professional development (CPD) programs. They think CPD programs promote their perspective towards profession and build up their self confidence and self-esteem in professional field.

3. Continuous professional development (CPD) programs are highly beneficial for the teachers of higher education in Tripura. According to them, these programs make their knowledge UpToDate, develops their quality of teaching and helps to get different promotional benefits in their service area.

4. Almost all the platforms of continuous professional development (CPD) programs are effective for the professional development of teachers of higher education in Tripura. Different platforms like seminar, workshop, orientation program, faculty development program etc. are effective for the teachers and they participate in these programs actively.

## VIII. SUGGESTIONS

Continuous development programs are one of the best methods for teachers to enhance their skills and keep pace with the ever-transforming educational system. Programs should be relevant and specific for teachers.

- Different people employ different ways to learn things. Some may learn better by listening. Some may be writing and taking notes. Some may be using visual learning tools. So various methods while conducting continuous professional development programs should be employed.
- Also, considering the interest and engagement level of the teachers' ways to keep them invested and engaged should be found out.
- One should give encouragement and support to implement the new ideas and strategies in their classrooms. Ensure that they can approach with any queries or concerns.
- After analysing the outcome and efficacy of the continuous development program for teachers, actionable feedback should be given which will help them to improve their teachings.
- Encouragement should be provided to the teachers to discuss the strategies and techniques with their colleagues which will reinforce the lessons in their teaching process.
- Opportunities to organise different continuous development programs should be increased in small state like Tripura.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

As educational reforms continue to dominate the education scene, teachers are expected to develop themselves and update their knowledge and skills. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) helps to facilitate learning and development among teachers, specifically to learn to cope with new and changing roles and new approaches to teaching. CPD helps teachers of higher education to get their promotion in professional field with financial benefits. It enhances teachers' capabilities and competencies and enables them to keep abreast of current issues, and helps them implement innovations and refine practices. So, teachers of higher education in Tripura should get more opportunities to participate in different CPD programs for the betterment of their profession.

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