

# PERCEPTION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Abstract**

*The quality and standards of an education system are largely depends on the quality, characteristics and commitment of teacher educators to their profession. Teacher education needs to be adequately strengthened and upgrade to accommodate the changing role of the teacher educators and so that teacher educators can effectively address contemporary issues regarding education. Current study was taken up to find out the status of teacher educators professional development activities, teacher training programmes, research activities and self-reflective practices at the secondary level for professional development. Based on the objectives of the convenience sampling was used in selection of Districts and Colleges/Teacher Training Institute. However, Random sampling was used in selection of respondents. Total sample of 5 Teacher Training Institution/Colleges from 5 Districts of Odisha and 25 respondents from different groups were selected. The present study was conducted by descriptive survey method. In this study data were collected through self made Questionnaires and analyzed by qualitatively and quantitatively. The study found that teacher educators' engagement and participation on various professional development activities and programmes in Colleges/Teacher Training Institute or out of Colleges/Teacher Training Institute enhances teacher educators' professional development which impacts a positive effect on teacher educators' performance. This study will be helpful to know which types of activities should be included in the curriculum by the educational planners and policy maker for professional development of teacher educators.*

**Keywords:** Professional Development, Teacher Educators

## **Introduction**

Teacher educators are the backbone of teacher education. The quality and effectiveness of teacher education largely depends on the professional development of teacher educators. Teacher educators' professional development (TEPD) is described as a process embracing all activities (content knowledge, pedagogy, planning forum etc.) that enhance professional career growth. There is an agreement among scholars about the importance of the teacher educators and his/her competence in the teaching-learning process. The teacher

educators are the heart of classroom instruction (Galabawa 2001; URT 2007). The effectiveness of the teacher educators depends on his/her competence (academically and pedagogically) and efficiency (ability, work load, and commitment), teaching and learning resources and methods; support from education managers and supervisors (Rogan 2004; Van den Akker & Thijs 2002; Mosha 2004). TEPD provides opportunities for teachers educators to explore new roles, develop new instructional techniques, refine their practices and broaden themselves both as educators and as individuals.

The professional skills of teacher educators are quite challenging in respect of quality learning because it is know that teachers tend to teach in their classes in a manner in which they were taught by their teacher educators. Real challenges of professional development of teacher educators are in implementing what has been acquired through professional development (Guskey, 2000). Moreover teacher educators have diversified professional responsibilities. Hence, linking the professional development experiences of teacher educators to his/her various professional obligations and sustaining it is a great challenge.

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)-2009 consider not only pre-services and in-service training but also constant support to the teacher educators and enabling environment that encourages and motivates them. Teacher educators to be motivated to do better there must be avenues for them to progress not merely in the terms of improvement in the position or in the grade, but also improvement in the terms of professional capabilities, ethical understanding and social awareness. Teacher educators need to have concentrated time to reflect and develop their own capabilities. Teacher educators need to be knowledgeable in specific disciplines so that they are able to see which task or activities would enable student-teacher educators'/student-teachers' to learn. When it comes to organizing classroom activities and projects there is no substitute for sound knowledge combined with effective skills. The National Staff Development Council (2007) created a set of nine standards that all professional development should follow. They include content knowledge and quality teaching, research-basis, collaboration, diverse learning needs, student learning environments, family involvement, evaluation, data-driven design, and teacher learning.

In Indian context the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training NCERT as well as NUPEA, are responsible for providing guidelines' policy and financial support for TEPD. Universities and Teacher-Education colleges are responsible for providing training, conducting policy oriented research relevant literature and materials supports to teacher educators in colleges/institutes. College/Institute management on its part is supposed to provide support to teachers on a daily basis through advice, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning activities. The teacher educators' is responsible for being proactive in seeking for opportunities for his/her own professional development.

## Rationale of the Study

The quality of teacher education is largely depends on the quality of teacher educators. The quality of teacher educators is depends on the practices of professional development. In other words professional development is very important in enhancing the qualities and capabilities domains of the teacher educators. Recently researchers have taken interest on professional development for teacher educators with reference to various variables. Some of the relevant studies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Behari (2014) found that the teacher educators themselves may not have favorable attitudes towards teacher education. Educators have not able to teach such as environmental education, value education, human rights, etc. Pettet (2013) reported that the principals have higher perception of professional development than teachers. Educators had a higher perception of the effectiveness of professional development at the school level versus the district level. Acevedo (2013) finding indicated that the differentiated professional development pilot program allowed teachers to create a learning organization where teachers communicated, provided feedback and changed their instructional practices through multiple self-directed learning opportunities. Fox-Norwitz (2013) reported that teacher educators perceive that funding and extra resources such as time and research would be more helpful to enable them to meet the challenges they are currently facing. Ansyari (2013) found that the In-service teachers' experiences are highly valued and benefitted; therefore, constructivist approach to teacher learning can be adopted to provide meaningful learning for in-service teachers. Ren and Ma (2011) revealed that teacher development is a long-term and continuous program which develops and changes teachers in many aspects, whether their professional knowledge, their opinion about teaching and their relation with students. Scoggins (2010) reported that participants believed content and pedagogy should be addressed through professional development led by teachers themselves. Bullock's (2009) found that examination of his learning about being a teacher educator highlighted how his professional development through researching practice based on self-study impacted his learning about, and knowledge development of, teacher education. Clark (2008) found that a professional development model that values diversity while intentionally provoking disequilibrium and disagreement. The study provides insight into how these kinds of researcher and practitioner partnerships may become more productive and opens new avenues for teacher learning and empowerment through critical dialogue. Komba, and Nkumbi, (2008) the findings indicate a conception and practice of Teacher Professional Development which combines both the raising of teacher academic qualifications and professional growth and developing countries contexts where general pedagogical knowledge takes precedence over the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter. Narasimhamurty (2007) found that teacher educators in B.Ed. College belonging to Hindu and Muslim communities differed significantly in their depersonalization, personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion and total burn out. Myers (2002) found that the view of that until teacher educators genuinely confronted the (mis) belief that telling, showing, and guiding practice was

sufficient for teacher education, then teaching about teaching would not be seen as a scholarly endeavor. Supovitz and Turner (2000) found that teachers' content preparation has a powerful influence on teaching practice and classroom culture.

The above discussion indicates that researcher has taken initiatives for studying professional development of teacher educators. Majority of research studies are focused on professional development of teachers and its effect on classroom teaching, students' achievement etc. Very few researches have been reported that studied the professional practices of teacher educators. No study found that studied professional development of teacher educators' perception towards professional development. From the related literature study it can be stated that Experience, Sex and Academic position may also influenced on teacher educators perception. But no one study found out regarding these factors from the above literature review. Therefore, an attempt is made to conduct research on this topic.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There are many challenges in front of the teacher educators. They are facing challenges professionally as well as in their personal perception and update themselves in their profession is an issue of concern today. Here in this study the researcher want to see that in spite of all the difficulties how the teacher educators are developing him/herself professionally and what those problems are which play as obstacles in the professional development of teacher educators. Thus the present study read as, *“Perception of Teacher Educators towards Professional Development.”*

### **Operational Definition of the Terms Used**

**Perception:** Teacher educators' ideas and views regarding the ongoing courses as well as theory and practices. In this study teacher educators will give their opinion and expresses views regarding professional development according to the situation.

**Professional Development:** Professional development refers to the development of a person in his/her professional role. It can be defined as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of teacher educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of trainees. It includes development of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions.

**Teacher Educators:** Teacher educators are those who involved in teaching in-service teachers at secondary level. Here teacher educator refers to the faculties working/teaching in the Teacher Training Institutes/Colleges.

## Objectives

1. To study the perception of teacher educators towards their professional development.
2. To compare the perception of teacher educators towards professional development with reference to sex, experience and academic position.
3. To find out role of Teacher Training Institute, College in promoting professional development of teacher educators.

## Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of teacher educators towards their professional development?
2. Is there any difference on perception of teacher educators towards professional development with reference to sex, experience and academic position?
3. What are the roles of Teacher Training Institute, College in promoting professional development of teacher educators?

## Delimitations

- The present study is conducted on teacher educators in five teacher training institutes or colleges in the state of Odisha.
- The collection of sample was only from 5 Government Teacher Training Institute/colleges.
- The sample of study was randomly selected from 25 teacher educators.

## Methodology

The decision about the method depends upon the nature of the problem selected and the kind of data necessary for its solution. The survey study method will be used in this study. It is the method of investigation that attempts to describe and interpret what exist in the present in the form of condition/practice.

## Population

In the present study the researcher is consider all teacher educators related to government teacher training institutes and colleges at secondary level in the state of Odisha as the population of the study.

## Sample

For the purpose of sample researcher is selected five teacher training institute or colleges. And researcher will also select five teacher educators of each teacher training institute or colleges. The researcher has been selected the entire sample by the help of Convenience sampling.

## Tool

For the present study questionnaire is used to seek the views and perception of teacher educators.

## Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher himself was involved in collecting data from each Teacher Training Institute/Colleges as per the guidelines provided in each tool. The researcher went to each Teacher Training Institute/Colleges for a period of 1-2 days to collect data from Teacher Educators.

## Techniques of Data Analysis

The data collected from teacher educators by questionnaire of perception scale of teacher educators towards their professional development has been tabulated and analyzed by using simple descriptive and inferential statistics i.e. computing Frequency, Percentage and Graphical data representation.

## Major Findings

### Perception of Teacher Educators towards Professional Development

- 28% of teacher educators have low, 48% of teacher educators have average and 24% of teacher educators have high perception towards their professional development.
- 42% of teacher educators strongly agreed with the statement of the benefits of professional development.
- 49.01% of the teacher educators opined that the Quality of PDP/activities attended played a very positive role on the professional development.
- 50.15% of teacher educators agreed that different educational apex bodies like NCTE, NCERT, UGC, SCERT etc. have a positive role on professional development.
- 49.01% enhanced teacher educators' classroom management practices, knowledge and understanding on their subject, teaching strategy which played a positive role for improvement of teacher educators' performance in learning.

### Finding Relating to Sex, Educational Qualification and Teaching Experience in Promoting PD of TE

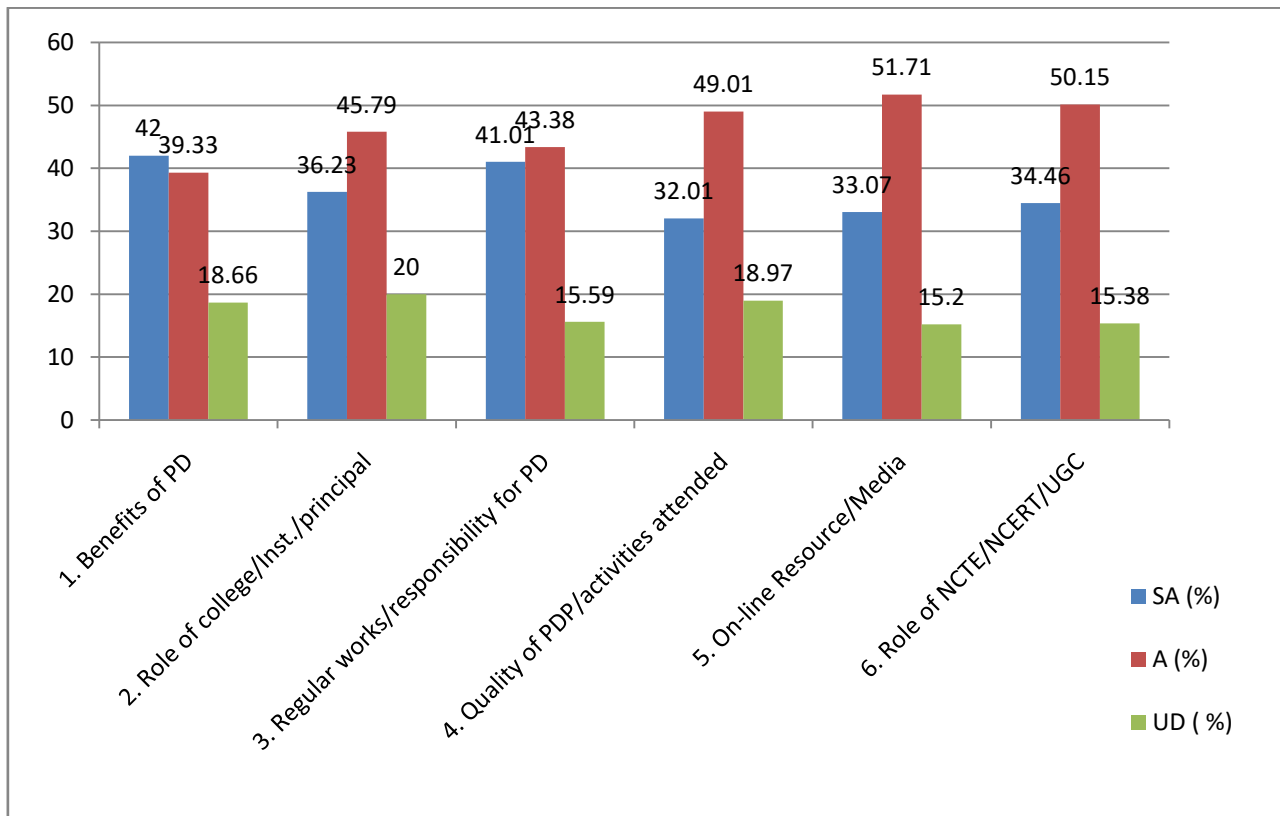
- 9.09% of male and 42.85% of female teacher educators have low perception. 27.27% of male and 21.42% of female have high perception towards their professional development.
- 57.14% of female teacher educators and 27.27% of male teacher educators strongly agreed that professional development helps in developing teacher educators' standard in their work and thinking.
- 42.85% of female teacher educators and 36.36% of male teacher educators have strongly agreed with the statement of PDP develops skills for innovation in teaching.



- 42.85% of highly qualified teacher educators have low level of perception where as 28.57% of teacher educators having P.G & B.Ed and P.G. & M.Phil qualification have low perception towards professional development.
- 61.53% of highly qualified teacher and 33.33% of low qualified teacher educators have agreed with the statement that PD helps teacher educator to think critically about their own professional practices.
- 69.23% of highly qualified teacher educators and 33.33% of low qualified teacher educators have agreed with the statement of PD activities develop TEs leadership's qualities.
- 71.42% of 0-10 years, 14.28% of both 11-20 years and 21-30 years experienced teacher educators have low perception towards professional development.
- 50% of high teaching experience teacher educators and only 16.66% of low teaching experience teacher educators have strongly agreed with the statement of TE becomes active academically by participating in PDP.
- 66.66% of highly teaching experience teacher educators and 33.33% of low teaching experience teacher educator have agreed with the statement of PD brings changes in teacher educator behavior.

#### **Finding Relating to Role of College/Dept./Institute/Principal in Promoting PD of TE**

- 27.27% of male and 42.85% of female teacher educators perceive that distributing work according to specialization of TE enhances PD.
- 42.85% of female teacher educators and 18.18% of male teacher educators have perceive that supervision by the principal enhances professional development of teacher educators.
- 57.14% of female teacher educators and 27.27% of male teacher educators have Organizing exchange programme with other institutes to promote PD.
- 61.53% of highly qualified teacher educators and only 16.66% of low qualified teacher educators perceived that Institutions provide opportunities to practice new skills gained during different programmes for PD.
- 50% of high experience teacher educators and 33.33% less teaching experience teacher educators that provide institute create a learning community for PD of teacher educators.
- 83.33% of high experience of teacher educators and 33.33% of low teaching experience of teacher educators have distributing work according to specialization of TE enhances PD.
- Organizing exchange programme with other institutes promote PD in this statement 50% less experience teacher educators and 83.33% high experience teacher educators have the same perception.
- 71.42% of high experience of teacher educators and 33.33% of less experience teacher educators have assigning work equally promotes professional development.



**Figure: Percentage of Perception of Teacher Educators towards their PD**

### Educational Implications

The present study has many implications for teacher educators, educational planners, Principals of teacher education institute as well as directors of NCERT/SCERT.

1. The study found that supervision of principal to working of teacher educators enhances professional development. Hence all the principals of the teacher education institutes are required to supervise and monitor the works of the faculty and provide necessary guidance.
2. The study found that quality of PDP/activities of teacher educators enhances professional development. It would be help the teacher educators to bring about necessary changes in their teaching learning strategy.
3. The study included that the role of educational apex bodies like NCTE, NCERT, UGC, SCERT etc. have a positive role on professional development of teacher educators. This study might be helpful to know which types of activities should be included in the curriculum by the educational planners for professional development of teacher educators.
4. The study found that the teacher educators perceive that distributing work accordingly to specialization of teacher educators enhances professional development. It would be helpful for teacher educators to enhance their personal growth and provides them different ways to develop their abilities for developing them as professionals.



5. The study reported that the professional development of teacher educators to think critically about their own professional practices. It will be helpful for teacher educators to enhance their personal growth and provide them different ways to develop their abilities for developing them as professionals.
6. The study found that professional development helps in developing teacher educators' standard in their work and thinking. This study will be helpful to know how interaction between teachers – teachers, principals – teachers as well as teachers – student teacher helps in manifestation of reflection process and how reflection process facilitates professional development of teacher educators.
7. The study found that professional development programme develops skill for innovation in teaching for professional development of teacher educators. This study will be helpful for curriculum framers to design effective curriculum where teacher educators reflect their ideas by interacting with others in colleges/teacher training institute as well as through another discussion, activities, programs or online mode.
8. The study found that Teacher Training Institution/College provide opportunities to practice new skills gained during different programmes for professional development of teacher educators. It will be helpful for teacher educators to enhance their teaching strategies, ways of reflection, to bring new ideas of critical issues and problems which will enhance their professional development.

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