

In-Service Teacher Training Institutions: Issues and Problems

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Received: November 25, 2018

Accepted: February 6, 2019

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Professional development enhances the capabilities of teachers for delivery education to the future generation. So teachers are equipped with advanced knowledge of subject matter and advanced strategies to modernize the society. This study was designed to highlight the issues and problems of in-service training institutes facing in conduction of training of in-service teachers. **Method:** The study was quantitative in nature, descriptive type and survey approach was used. The target population of the study comprised of all Principals and Master Trainers of government elementary colleges of education. Sample consisted of twenty Principals and three hundred Master Trainers selected on random basis. Two similar questionnaires were self developed, validated and administered for both research subjects. The reliability of research instruments for Principals and Master Trainers was found 0.849 and 0.856 respectively. **Findings:** Many problems were faced by teacher training institutions for proper conduct of in-service teacher training programs. It includes short duration of training programs, shortage of teacher training institutions, non-availability of standardized textbooks, lack of coordination, lack of professional interest of trainees, lack of monitoring and evaluation, lack of transport, security and residential facilities, shortage of competent teaching staff, shortage of physical and instructional facilities. **Implications for Research and Practice:** It is recommended that proper funds may be allocated to training institutions to overcome the shortage of infrastructure and other allied problems. A new cadre of educational trainers or experts should be inducted and established in the School Education Department for enhancing the professional development of educators. **KEYWORDS:** Professional Development, Problems, In-service Training, Reliability, Strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Professional development is defined by Shukla (2014) as; educational opportunities for school teachers and administrative personnel with goals of personal, professional growth and school improvement. Iqbal (2005) and Bansal (2007) described that teacher education needs to be strengthen and stress upon the main characteristics of a profession which flourish and produce professionalism in the educator. Teachers have to keep abreast of the latest developments not only in their field of specialization but also in areas of educational developments, social and cultural issues through continuous in-service training (Hussain, 2004).

Problems of In-service Teacher Training

Over the years, Government of Pakistan has taken numerous initiatives to improve professional development of the teachers by launching various types of in-service teacher training programs in all parts of the country, including Sindh province. However, the required objectives of these programs were not achieved so far due to many reasons. The problems identified by the National Education Policy (1998-2010) about the poor performance of the teachers were as follows:

- The profession of teaching is usually the last choice for the young men.
- All the existing in-service teacher training programs run at teacher training institutions have short duration showing imbalance among the courses pertaining to academic knowledge of the subject, content of school curriculum, teaching methods, teaching practices and curricular activities.
- The training institutions are faced budgetary and financial problems and are not adequately equipped to meet the requirements of producing advanced system of quality teacher education.
- No policy framework and implementation procedure regarding training programs of teachers.

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- The teacher training institutions face acute shortage of buildings, equipment, furniture, teaching aids, library books and other reading materials. The teacher trainers are not provided with necessary support services. These institutions are also not supervised in effective manners (AEPAM, 2015).

The present National Education Policy-2009 stressed on Continuous Professional Development (CDP) of teachers and proposed various actions for improving professional development of teachers (Govt. of Pakistan, 2009). Similarly, Iqbal (2005) pointed out major alarming problems of professional development of teachers such as short duration of teacher education programs and teaching practice, curriculum, criteria for the selection of teacher educators and lack of research in the field of teacher education.

Furthermore, Jumani (2006) pointed out following main problems of in-service teacher training in the country due to these problems, teachers were not producing expected students' performance:

- No organized attempt to improve in-service teacher training at national level.
- Aims and objectives of in-service teacher training are not clear and well explained.
- Not properly execution of useful schemes and curriculum reforms.
- Undue importance and emphasis on the quantitative expansion of in-service teacher training programs.
- Lack of clear cut policy of recruitment and selection of teachers on merit.
- The training period of all in-service teacher training programs is very short.
- The curriculum of in-service teacher training programs is narrow.
- No close coordination between education departments and teacher training institutions.
- Poorly equipped teacher training institutions from the point of physical facilities like building, staff and instructional material.

UNESCO (2006) report pointed out following main problems for improving professional development of teachers:

- In- service teacher training programs are not designed according to the requirements of trainee teachers.
- No effort is made to modify and tailor the syllabus as per the requirements of the teachers.
- Subject knowledge is not integrated with teaching skills.
- In-service teacher training programs of various levels are not properly assessed and lack adequate materials and delivery aids.
- Teacher trainers are not qualified, competent or motivated enough to transfer knowledge according to capabilities of the trainees.
- Lack of classroom-based support both for trainers and the trainees.
- Poor quality of textbooks and learning materials, and
- Lack of systems to assess students' learning outcomes.

The document of National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (2009) has also pointed out the following key issues and problems of teacher training in the country:-

- Teachers' certification programs do not provide effective communication skills, critical thinking and creative leadership to promote depth content knowledge of language arts, mathematical reasoning, social and natural sciences and cultural context to the teachers.
- The pedagogical skills taught by the teachers are designed to foster rote learning, unquestioning acceptance of textual materials and passive preparation for the tests.
- The recruited teachers do not know the accepted norms, benchmarks and professional standards for teachers in the country, and
- A system of standardized testing for knowledge, skills and performance at various levels of education with different multidisciplinary expertise is needed to be instituted before licensing teachers to enter the profession.

Malik (2014) pointed out the following main problems creating hindrances for proper conduct of in- service teacher training programs in the country.

- **Capacity Building:** Capacity building of human resource in the provinces as the revised curriculum is focused on higher order thinking skills and professional development.
- **Assessment System:** Uniform assessment system based on curriculum is initiated for quality instructions and effective delivery mechanism.
- **Constitutional Amendment:** After 18th Constitutional amendment some new responsibilities are assigned to Directorate of Curriculum and Teacher Education, for which capacity building of the relevant staff is required.
- **Policy and Standard:** No policy framework operated in teacher training programs.

- **Professional Standards:** Professional standards have to be set up as these standards integrate critical knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to perform a particular role in efficient way.
- **Accreditation:** The process of accreditation and certification should be started to maintain the quality in evaluation process to achieve the predetermined standards.
- **Core Competencies:** The teachers have invariably lagged behind in developing core competencies basis of their profession. These core competencies are the main components on which subsequent knowledge and skills are built upon.
- **Recruitment:** Not selecting the teachers on merit, lack of proper screening and relaxing of qualification requirements have jeopardized the end objective of providing quality education.
- **Curriculum:** The current curricula do not focus on nurturing a creative and learning environment involving questioning and problem solving. Subject matter is not regularly updated to keep pace with recent subject advances.
- **Teacher Educators:** Teacher educators have poor teacher quality and delivery. They administer their classes in the traditional teaching style of lecture giving, dictation and notes. Trainers fail to cultivate any creative thinking, inquiry and problem solving among their trainees.
- **Low Content Knowledge:** Content knowledge of in-service trained teachers in the country is low and very little resources are earmarked for follow-up.
- **In-Service Programs:** In-service teacher training programs were not designed according to the requirements of trainees. No effort is made to modify and tailor the syllabus as per the requirements of the trainees.
- **Support System and School Management:** Teachers require a strong support structure within their schools to improve their professional development. A healthy and facilitative teaching environment, encouragement from peers and senior faculty prove helpful for the teachers to grow and focus on the job.
- **Incentives and Career Path:** Promotion is currently based on seniority rather than performance. Low salaries characterize the profession.
- **Low investment on education:** Since independence, in Pakistan, a small portion of GDP is being allocated at national levels and due to this reason, provincial governments are unable to meet the demands for uplifting education standard of the country.
- **Lack of Political Will:** No government policy/plan can be implemented in true spirit for improving education standard of the people without the support of political authorities, but we are still lacking this power. and
- **Weak Educational Organizational Structure:** It is a common practice that education managers and even teachers were transferred on political basis. Often they do not have competency to perform their duties as it is expected. This affects the whole system of education in the schools (Bolan, 1998).

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to highlight problems of training institutes for organizing in-service training of teachers.

Research Question of the Study

What are the problems of training institutes organizing in-service training of teachers?

Significance of the Study

This study is helpful to the policy makers, academicians, decision makers and educational experts which engage in conduction of in-service teacher training programs for enhancing professional development of the teachers.

Delimitations of the Study

- The study was delimited to Sindh province of Pakistan.
- The study was delimited to 10 districts (Dadu, Hyderabad, Karachi, Khairpur, Larkana, Mirpurkhas, Naushero Feroze, Sanghar, Sukkur and Thatta).
- The study was further delimited to the principals and master trainers of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education.

METHOD

Research Design

The design of this study was descriptive type; survey approach was used and quantitative method in nature.

Research Sample

According to Gay (2008), population is a “target group of people having definite set of characteristics for drawing required information”. It comprises all the possible cases (persons, objects, events) that constitute a known whole population. The population of this study comprised of all 25 Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education of Sindh province of ten selected districts (Dadu, Hyderabad, Karachi, Khairpur, Larkana, Mirpur khas, Naushero Feroze, Sanghar, Sukkur and Thatta) out of 23 districts of the Sindh province. These districts were selected through stratified random sampling technique due the reason that all these districts had at least both Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education (M/W). All the principals and master trainers of these colleges were selected as population of the study.

Table 1 Distribution of Population and Sample

Sr. No	Respondents	Population distribution			Sample distribution		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.	Principals	14	11	25	10	10	20
2.	Mater Trainers	395	403	798	150	150	300

Table 1 indicates that there are two categories of the respondents i.e. 20 (80%) Principals (10M +10W) out of 25 (14M +11W) Principals of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education and 300 (38%) Master Trainers (150M +150W) out of 798 master trainers (395M +403W) of Govt. Elementary Colleges of Education, Sindh. The total sample size of the study was consisted of 320 respondents selected through random sampling.

Research Instrument and Procedure

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, a questionnaire research instrument was developed, validated through try out test and administered for getting required information from the respective respondents. The Principals and Master Trainers are the most appropriate individuals of the study. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability of research instrument of Principal and Master Trainer was found 0.849 and 0.856 respectively. According to Field (2009), if the value of reliability is more than 0.70%, the questionnaire is considered as the most reliable. There was a high reliability in the research instrument and the questionnaires were valid and reliable for the study procedure.

Data Analysis

The survey data were read, checked, arranged and then coded to shape the meaningful themes. The descriptive statistics data were analyzed with the help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. The results obtained from statistical analysis are presented in tabulation which leads to the answering the stated research question.

RESULTS

In order to search out the problems of in-service teacher training programs, frequency and percentages was applied to analyze the collected data. The results of the present research are presented and interpreted as given below;

Table: 2 Short Duration of In-Service Teacher Training Programs

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Short duration of in-service teacher training programs.	SA	10	50	130	43
	A	6	30	158	53
	UN	2	10	2	1
	DA	1	5	4	1
	SDA	1	5	6	2

Table 2 describes that 80% principals and 96% master trainers agreed that in-service training had short duration programs.

Table: 3 Non Availability of Appropriate Standardized Textbooks

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Non-availability of appropriate standardized textbooks and training modules.	SA	9	45	140	47
	A	5	20	130	43
	UN	5	25	8	3
	DA	1	5	14	4
	SDA	0	0	8	3

Table 3 indicates that 65% principals and 90% master trainers agreed that non-availability of appropriate standardized textbooks and training modules formed a big problem for in-service training of the teachers.

Table: 4 *Lack of Co-ordination among Education Departments*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of co-ordination among education administrative departments and teacher training institutions.	SA	10	30	148	49
	A	5	25	121	40
	UN	3	15	14	5
	DA	1	5	11	4
	SDA	1	5	6	2

Table 4 shows that 55% principal and 89% master trainers agreed that there was lack of coordination among education administrative departments and teacher training institutions.

Table: 5 *Outmoded Methods of Teaching and Evaluation*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Outmoded methods of teaching and evaluation.	SA	10	50	171	57
	A	5	25	108	36
	UN	3	15	10	3
	DA	1	5	8	3
	SDA	1	5	3	1

Table 5 indicates that 75% principals and 93% master trainers agreed that there was an outmoded method of teaching and evaluation in the in-service training programs.

Table: 6 *Lack of Professional Interest and Enthusiasm of Teachers*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of professional interest and enthusiasm of teachers.	SA	10	50	177	59
	A	6	30	106	35
	UN	1	5	8	3
	DA	3	15	6	2
	SDA	0	0	3	1

Table 6 shows that 80% principal and 94% master trainers agreed that there was a lack of professional interest and enthusiasm of teachers.

Table: 7 *Master Trainers are Lacking Required Skills*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Master trainers are lacking required skills to bring change in trainees.	SA	10	50	160	53
	A	6	30	126	42
	UN	2	10	9	3
	DA	1	5	2	1
	SDA	1	5	3	1

Table 7 indicates that 80% principals and 95% master trainers agreed that master trainers lacked required skills to bring change in trainees.

Table: 8 *Lack of Monitoring of In-service Training Programs*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of monitoring of in-service training programs.	SA	10	50	118	39
	A	8	40	139	46
	UN	1	5	24	8
	DA	1	5	9	3
	SDA	0	0	10	4

Table 8 describes that majority 90% principals and 85% master trainers agreed that there was lack of monitoring of in-service training programs.

Table: 9 Irregularities of Trainee Teachers in Teacher Training Programs

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Irregularity of trainee teachers in teacher training programs.	SA	9	45	154	51
	A	5	25	108	36
	UN	2	10	19	6
	DA	3	15	9	3
	SDA	1	5	10	4

Table 9 indicates that 70% principals and 87% master trainers agreed that irregularity of trainee teachers in teacher training programs was a problem.

Table: 10 Lack of Transport, Security and Residential Problems

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of transport, security and residential problems of trainees and trainers.	SA	10	50	186	62
	A	6	30	77	26
	UN	1	5	18	6
	DA	2	10	9	3
	SDA	1	5	10	3

Table 10 indicates that majority 80% principals and 88% master trainers agreed that there was a lack of transport, security and residential problems both for trainees and trainers.

Table: 11 Appointment Procedures for Teachers Disregards Merit

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Appointment procedure for teachers disregards merit due to political interferences and other malpractices.	SA	10	50	162	54
	A	7	35	98	33
	UN	1	5	15	5
	DA	1	5	12	4
	SDA	1	5	13	4

Table 11 describes that majority 85% principals and 87% master trainers agreed that appointment procedure of teachers disregarded merit due to political interferences and other malpractices was problem.

Table: 12 Shortages of Competent Teaching Staff

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Shortage of competent teaching staff.	SA	10	50	198	66
	A	6	30	56	19
	UN	2	10	21	8
	DA	1	5	12	4
	SDA	1	5	13	4

Table 12 illustrates that majority 80% principals and 84% master trainers agreed that there was shortage of competent teaching staff.

Table: 13 Shortages of Physical and Instructional Facilities

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Shortage of physical and instructional facilities in teacher training institutions.	SA	10	50	184	61
	A	5	25	67	22
	UN	2	10	26	9
	DA	2	10	11	4
	SDA	1	5	12	4

Table 13 indicates that 75% principals and 83% master trainers agreed that there was shortage of physical and instructional facilities in teacher training institutions.

Table: 14 *No Standardized Procedure for Teachers' Appointments*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
There is no standardized procedure for appointment of teachers in teacher training institutions.	SA	10	50	162	54
	A	5	25	98	33
	UN	1	5	29	10
	DA	2	10	6	2
	SDA	2	10	5	2

Table 14 describes that 75% principals and 87% master trainers agreed that there was no standardized procedure for appointment of teachers in teacher training institutions.

Table: 15 *Institutionalized Arrangements for Regular Training to Teachers*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
There is no institutionalized arrangement for providing regular training to teachers and teacher educators.	SA	10	50	177	59
	A	6	30	97	32
	UN	2	10	15	5
	DA	1	5	6	2
	SDA	1	5	5	2

Table 15 illustrates that majority 80% principals and 91% master trainers agreed that there was no institutionalized arrangements for providing regular training to teachers and teacher educators.

Table: 16 *Lack of Proper Incentives/ Remunerations for Teachers*

Statement	Level	Principals		Master Trainers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of proper incentives/ remunerations for teachers.	SA	10	50	198	66
	A	5	25	86	29
	UN	2	10	9	3
	DA	2	10	6	2
	SDA	1	5	1	0

Table 16 indicates that 75% principals and 95% master trainers agreed that there was lack of proper incentives/remunerations for teachers.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was concluded that there were many problems faced by teacher training institutions for proper conduct of in-service teacher training programs. It included short duration of training programs, shortage of teacher training institutions, non-availability of standardized textbooks, lack of coordination, lack of professional interest of trainees, lack of monitoring and evolution, lack of transport, security and residential facilities, political interferences in teachers' recruitment, shortage of competent teaching staff, shortage of physical and instructional facilities. The following recommendation was drawn on the basis of results and conclusions;

- **Provision of Infrastructure and Teaching Staff:** Proper funds may be allocated to institutions to overcome the shortage of infrastructure and other allied problems. More permanent competent teachers may also be hired on priority basis to fill the vacant posts to control the problem.
- **Running of Special Cadres for Teacher Trainers:** It is recommended that special cadres to train the teacher trainers may be run to train the teachers according to the requirements of modern era.
- **Updating of In-Service Teacher Training Programs:** It is recommended that syllabus of training programs may be updated to fulfill the need of trainee teachers and the requirements of national standards for improving professional development of teachers in Sindh province and duration of all programs may be increased for implementing contents of curricula in true spirit.
- **Co-ordination between Teacher Training and Educational Institutions:** It is recommended that before launching all the in-service training programs, teacher training institutions will get consent in advance from

educational administrative authorities for availability of teachers to participate in the training programs, so that wastage of resources can be controlled.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation of Training Programs:** It is recommended that a proper systematic follow up procedure be adopted to overview the performance of the teachers in the classrooms, so that the quality of training programs be improved for further improving professional competency of the teachers.
- **Establishment of District Institutes of Teacher Education (DITEs):** It is recommended that in each district of the Sindh province, at least a District Institute of Teacher Education (DITE)/Govt. Elementary College of Education may be established to provide in-service training facilities to the maximum teachers of rural areas at their door steps to improve their professional competency.

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