

## **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATORS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The teachers place in the society is of vital importance. Education is an important aspect in every ones life. professional development is a process of improving and increasing capabilities of staff through access to education and training opportunities in the workplace, through outside organizations, or watching others perform the job .The MHRD, Government of India,(Now renamed as Ministry of Education) document on ‘Restructuring and Reorganization of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher. continuous professional development of teachers refers to the in-service teacher education programs meant for development and professional growth with in the realms of this profession . The paper discusses in brief the scenario of continuous professional development of teachers and teacher educator, models of CDP are in practice in India, agencies of professional development. Continuous professional development of teachers would definitely bring a positive change into Indian educational system that would produce good, well seasoned and great leaders of tomorrow.

**KEYWORDS :** Continuous professional development, teachers, teacher educators, in-service teacher training programs.

### **Introduction:**

Continuing professional development of teacher educators has always been in place. But today it has got a renewed mandate under Teacher Education Mission .We only need to look at the results to decide what processes need to be put in place. Anything that we do needs to be goal oriented. Students benefit more from teachers who are not only qualified and experienced but at the same time always have an updated knowledge base .To impart such an education to the teacher educators and consequently to the students they teach, we need enrich- ment programs

from time to time for teachers. Even if a profession has people with the required qualifications and experience to stay in the job but no opportunities to improve, update and increase knowledge base with changing time and growing needs, it affects their and also the institution's performance adversely. Hence is the need for constant renewal and up gradation of skills to suit the growing or changing needs and avoid any kind of stagnation. Continuous Professional development is specifically targeted towards the same.

According to Anho (2011), teachers' education is the process which nurtures prospective teachers and updates qualified teachers' knowledge and skills in the form of continuous professional development. Teachers' education revolves around the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behavior and skills required in the performance of effective duties in the classrooms, and in other social gatherings including churches. Teachers' education is often divided into three stages namely:

- (a) Initial teacher training;
- (b) The induction process involving the training and supports of the trainees during the first few years of teaching or the first year in a particular school; and
- (c) Teacher development or continuing performing development and intensive process for practicing teachers.

### **Teacher**

A Teacher is a person who helps others to acquire knowledge competences or values. Teacher is the central element in Educational system. Teachers are one of the most important factors that help in increasing the efficiency and effectively influence the Education system. Education is the process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement of a better and higher quality of life. Yet schools cannot do this with out having teachers who wish to being forth change and who process the necessary human traits, abilities, skills& competencies. The important of the teacher is the educational process is unquestionable.

### **What is professional development?**

Professional development of teachers refers to the procedures and ways of assisting the teachers in constant renewal of their knowledge base and honing their skills to adjust the emerging needs and changing situations of the teaching profession .Professional development is not a quick fix, one shot affair. No one is a full blown professional at the end of a professional education degree like that of a B.Ed., M.Ed., or Ph.D. Neither are we just "born teachers ". As teacher educators we are in the process of "becoming" effective teachers. We need to discover who we are and what we stand for, our intentions both for ourselves and for the profession of our choice, and how we want to express ourselves as persons and contribute to the causes we have espoused. We do this through ongoing and consistent study, through our deliberate practice as well as reflection

on our practice and through our dialogue with our peers and mentors. Becoming an authentic educator is also about discovering our unique gifts, building our strengths, learning from others, cultivating our best qualities, nurturing ourselves, raising our levels of awareness, connecting with our passion for teaching, fostering meaningful relationships with students and peer groups. I propose training of the educators in all the three areas of their activity, namely,

### **1. Development of the person of the educator – Intra-personal skills**

All of us have a personal or ‘inner side’ as well as an ‘outer side’ that is represented by our actions and behaviors. The two are intertwined. It is the inside that is the cause of the outside. The reality of our experience is totally subjective. All our actions and the results that we produce are in terms of the persons that we are. That is, all our behaviors are ‘inside – out’, but the illusion under which we live is the ‘outside – in’ paradigm, that is, we believe that our behaviors are caused by others and the situations! The tipping point is when we realize that all our behaviors are caused from the inside, and give away our ‘outside – in’ explanation. Doing so is totally transformative and empowering.

Education has neither acknowledged its importance so far nor attempted to develop it in a systematic way. Maslow had acknowledged that the problems that we face both as persons and as humanity is because people are not growing as persons.

### **2. Development of interpersonal / facilitative attitudes and skills**

Teaching is as much or even more about learning to relate to students as it is about imparting knowledge and skills. Therefore, it goes without saying that the teacher educators’ interpersonal skills and attitudes, what we usually refer to as facilitative skills, are crucially important for an effective educator. When students resist learning, whether it is in the primary classes or postgraduate classes, it is often that they are resisting the teacher! If we observe the use of teacher power in the classroom, it is most of the time authoritarian or patronizing, both of which inhibit and suppress students. If education is the cultivation of the whole child, the teacher needs to have the skills of facilitation for students’ overall growth and learning. Often it is the socio-emotional issues that the students are faced with that stand in the way of their academic learning.

### **3. Development of academic and pedagogic competence**

Learning to teach is a lifelong developmental process and one gradually discovers one’s own style through training and learning through reflection as well as critical inquiry. Training is a process that amplifies and provides a context for learning in the three main areas, namely,

- Subject contents and how to apply them ( the knowledge base of teaching),
- Skills of teaching and learning the best practices ( the Pedagogical base of teaching ),

□ Attitudes and values ( the facilitative base of teaching )

. **Fullan (1995)** defines professional development as “the sum total of formal and informal learning pursued and experienced by the teacher in a compelling learning environment under conditions of complexity and dynamic change.”

“The rapidly changing nature of development of practice and process has undoubtedly influenced both the meaning and use of these terms”. (Staff development, INSET, CPD and teacher development). e.g. Fullan uses these terms interchangeably”.

After reading different literature on CPD, we can infer that professional development for teachers in general includes pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes but when we talk about continuous professional development of teachers, we refer primarily to the in-service teacher training programs held for working teachers only. Hence while the goal of professional development is common to both in-service and pre-service programs, INSET is more like a process and CPD or Continuous Professional development is more like a product.

### **Professional development of teachers in India:**

Professional development has always been given importance in India since a long time. Even during the Vedic period, extension activities such as yatras and Katha’s for teachers were organized although they were not as structured and systematic as the programs in the present times. At present the continuous professional development for teachers is organized in the name of INSET or In -service Teacher training.

### **The following models of CPD are in practice in India:**

**1) Cascade model:** In this model a group of teachers attend the professional development programme. The training provided is intensive and focuses on few skills in general and is imparted by the teacher educators of institutions like DIETS, SCERTs etc. who are known as the 'master trainers' in the programme. Later the participants or the trainees come back to their work environments as “champion teachers” or “a vanguard team” and provide the same training to their peer teachers. This model is time and cost effective and is advantageous with regard to support provision at school level and helps disseminate information to the largest number of teachers.

**2) Reflective Teaching Model:** This model is based on the principles of constructivism. In this model, the teachers in pairs are required to create a model of teaching through discussions and then reflect on their own practice. This is followed by a question answer round and discussion on the topics. This kind of teaching that involves co-teaching or shared teaching encourages reflection in planning and debriefing. The CPD programs conducted by the British Council in India are based on this principle.

**3) Split model:** This model is similar to the reflective model. First, training is received at the block level and then it is disseminated to schools. A group of teachers attend the workshops or seminars on professional development that continues for a week and then implement the ideas or practices learnt for two to three months and then attend a follow-up program.

**4) Site based models:** As the name suggests this model of professional development is practiced in schools among the teachers. This model generally involves locally based providers and teachers in facilitation, instruction, content, curriculum assessment and technology. A common example of such a model is the system of action researches carried out by teacher educators in schools. SCERTs conduct action researches using the same principle in many schools.

**5) Self-directed model :** In this model, the teachers attempt to develop themselves as teachers by their own efforts such as reading books, taking memberships of various libraries, using ICT such as accessing online programmes etc. but unfortunately it mostly exists in an unorganized form in our country with a lack of database and evaluation procedures. In other countries such as United Kingdom we have it in the form of personalized CPD but a sound system of evaluation is also available there.

#### **, Agencies of professional development:**

The main agencies of professional development in India are DIETS SCERTS, IASES, NUEPA, NCERT, KVS, Extension Education Centers. Etc.

#### **Modes of professional development in India:**

The common modes of professional development for teachers in India are: Workshops, Seminars, Conference, Study groups, Experimental schools, Correspondence courses, Radio broadcasts, Films, Extension activities, Field activities etc.

#### **Problems in the present system:**

The Indian system of professional development for teachers has not been problem free. Luckily we have researches been conducted from time to time on the same and some have been considered for this paper. A lot of researchers have pointed out the major flaws in the existing system of Continuous Professional Development.

A position paper submitted to MHRD (2011) has reported the following flaws in the present system of professional development in India:

Top down approach in the present cascade model of CPD has been ineffective in bringing positive results.

Feedback and evaluation are poor in continuous professional development programs.

Teachers who are already under a rigid hierarchy and administrative rather than academic issues find it difficult and demotivated to attend professional development programs.

There is nothing to ensure that what is learnt by the teachers in these programs actually reaches the schools and students.

Other researchers such as Ranganathan (1992), Paranjpe and Sandhya (1997), Shyni Duggal (2005.), S.K.Yadav (2012) and many more in their researches on In-service Teacher Education have reported that the following problems exist in the

Less involvement of teachers in evaluation and planning

Low satisfaction among the participants.

Programs do not cater to Special education needs.

Feedback and follow up is weak.

Reflective practice is absent in most programs.

Constructivism as envisaged by (NCF2005 ) not realized

Absence of concept of multiple intelligences

Tackling learning difficulties were rated low.

### ***Suggestions for application in the Indian context based on the above mentioned models***

**1. Bringing about horizontal learning in place of the top-down approach – a more democratic model:** The education system in India is largely a top-down approach, in which the decisions always come down from a higher authority, knowledge always comes from a higher level (status, position and income wise) and is passively transmitted to the learners and so is the case in most professional development programmes where the teachers passively accept the knowledge from experts in a passive mode in most seminars and work-shops.

**2. Increasing access to CPD opportunities :** The huge population of our country results in burdening the education systems with entrance tests and rigid criterias for almost everything related with education, making opportunities available to only a few and creating a crowd of candidates always competing for admissions. Even the in-service teacher training programs in India are not accessible to all the teachers due to their rigid nature of entrance and eligibility criteria's.

**3. Flexibility :** All the international models described in the paper had a common element of flexibility. If the professional development programmes have to cater to a large population of school teachers in India, they have to be organised in more flexible ways so that the pressures on

teachers to complete syllabus in schools specially in the private sector can be handled well. Involving administrators in the programs will also help them understand teachers problems.

**4. Partnerships :** Just as these successful models of CPD , we can also have CPD programs run in partnerships of colleges , universities and schools and even private organizations. This will lead to a more horizontal flow of knowledge and sharing of resources among the stakeholders and also help in their better funding too.

**5. Using ICT for proper follow up and feedback:** Follow-up and feedback after attending CPD workshops and in-service training programmes is very important and is a much ignored feature in most of our professional programmes (as has been pointed out by some research studies in this paper earlier). Use of ICT such as mobiles, email, face book and other social media etc. can be used to collect feedback from the participants and also later when they implement the learnt strategies in schools , follow up can be taken instead of losing touch with them as in most cases.

**6. Evaluation of cpd programs:** All professional development programs should be evaluated and results should be analysed with respect to the achievements in students in various aspects including academics. Evaluation should not be confined to feedback about general satisfaction of the participants but on actual results and experiences after implementing the strategies learnt in the program in real classrooms. The tools can be questionnaire, rating scales, checklists, interviews etc. even students can be interviewed for this purpose.

**7. Respecting individual differences within teachers :** Teachers like students too have individual differences, likes and dislikes. It is important to cater to these differences and provide them with more autonomy to choose the kind of CPD programme they want to attend.

**8. Long term CPD programs:** It is a common feature of all the CPD models discussed in this paper and a lot of arguments by various researchers and educationists have been provided to establish that short-term workshops cannot meet the objectives of professional development of teachers and that for these programs to be effective in real sense , they need to be long term and intensive.

**9. Teacher support:** Supporting the teachers and helping them meeting challenges of teaching such as classroom management, discipline issues , dealing with special children ,guiding the novice teachers through strategies such as peer coaching and mentoring can bring about a more conducive environment for teaching in schools. Research by teachers-Research in education is confined to the purview of teacher educators and scholars , Action researches can also be conducted by the teachers in their schools

## Conclusion

Continuous professional development of teachers would definitely bring a positive change into educational system,Teacher education needs to recognize this importance and incorporate

relevant aspects into their courses, for the future benefit of all concerned. Nurturing meaningful relationships and maintaining a positive and stimulating classroom climate are some of a teacher's most important obligations.

□ Teacher training institutions should be strengthened to adequately respond to teachers' needs and demands.

□ Opportunities for continuing professional development of teachers should be created and exploited to the maximum.

□ Information and Communications Technology (ICT) should be effectively utilized by teachers to facilitate learning and teaching. The development of ICT literacy is so important that the European Commission (2003:19) affirmed that "it was the first step in professional development". Teachers should be well grounded in the use of ICT so that they would be able to effectively, confidently and competently use ICT to achieve instructional goals.

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