



CAPACITY BUILDING IN TEACHER EDUCATION: A DOMINION TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Teaching profession, once upon a time a noble profession is no more deemed to be so... teachers, most of them, lack passion for teaching, consider teaching as 'work load' and try to shed it off as far as possible. And here, we are, the teacher education institutions, assuming that the *teachers are not only born, but are made!* We even changed the nomenclature from *teacher training to teacher education*, hoping to discipline the minds and attitudes of teachers. How and how well – teachers are prepared for teaching is a critical indicator of education quality. Preparing teachers for the challenges of a changing world means equipping them with subject-specific expertise, effective and innovative teaching practices, an understanding of technology and the ability to work collaboratively with other teachers, members of the community and parents .So in this direction Capacity building is an approach to development. It is response to the multidimensional process of change, not a set of discrete pre packaged technical interventions intended to bring about a predefined outcome. As educational institutions face continuous pressure to raise standards and to improve performance there will be an increase in demand for educational institutions to develop their capacities in order to see that their quality assurance systems are effective and functional. Models for capacity building for institutions acknowledge the differences between institutions and reinforce that capacity building is a process that individual institutions need to embrace for their own development purposes. With this rationale, the presenter has decided to present topic *Capacity Building in Teacher Education: A Dominion to Professional Development*. However, as every institution respond to the different challenges of capacity building for development in unique ways, but here I would like to share a few practices which we are following in our college. K. J. Somaiya Comprehensive College of Education, Training and Research, which is an ambitious, innovative and progress oriented teacher education institution. It was established on 29th August 1990. The college is a Gujarati Linguistic Minority Institution. We including Principal are 10 faculty members who are striving to proliferate for professional development. This paper tries to exhibit that how our institution is making an attempt to respond to the different challenges of capacity building for development in following ways: 1. Bridging the Digital Divide and Expanding Internet ccess 2. Setting up a Culture of Life-long Education and Building a Learning Society 3. Strengthening the Managerial and Staff Training for developing Competencies in the Context of Globalization 4. Promoting Reflective Practices

Key Words: *Capacity Building, Professional Development, Dominion, Teacher Education*

INTRODUCTION

The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process of any stage. It is, therefore important that the teacher is well prepared to do his/her work efficiently and effectively.” Quality concern in Secondary Teacher Education, NCTE,1998.

Conventional Modes of professional development:

- Seminars
- Workshops
- Refresher Courses
- Orientation Programme
- Conferences

DEMAND OF PRESENT SCENARIO:

Reform requires that teachers learn new roles and ways of teaching. That translates into a long-term developmental process requiring teachers to focus on changing their own practice. The problem is, where do teachers find the time for change in their already busy schedules? Unfortunately, "the demands posed by daily teaching and other aspects of the reform continue to absorb a bulk of teachers' energy, thought, and attention" (McDiarmid, 1995). This issue explores the vital concern of how to carve out time, opportunity, and other resources teachers need to realize the vision of education reform. Unfortunately, the teacher education institutions are not being able to do justice to teacher education due to the delayed admission procedures, politicization of teacher education institutions, low quality of teacher educators, and such other factors; there are not many teachers who attribute their teaching competencies and skills to teacher education programs.. The decline in the number of students taking admission in the B.Ed courses - which offer teacher training - has been as much as 20-30 percent over the last four years (Bharati Baveja, head of the department of education in Delhi University). Since international schools are offering attractive pay scales for teachers and are choosing the best of the lot in campus interviews, I feel that there is even less demand for M Ed as well. So professional development can no longer be viewed as an event that occurs on a particular day of the academic year; rather, it must become part of the daily work life of educators. Thus our institution is trying following ways to embrace for professional development of pre-service teachers as well as teacher educators:

1. BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND EXPANDING INTERNET ACCESS

2. There is need to bring about social equity through education. Schools and teachers should be empowered to bridge the digital divide by making internet accessible to one and all. Our institution is trying to train teachers to design and transact online courses and online assessment. All the pre-service teachers are benefited from ICT applications to education by following ways:
3. **Share n Care Programme:** In order to empower the B.Ed students with the knowledge and skills required for the use of information technology in instruction the students went through a 'Share and Care Program'. As a product of this training program each student teacher prepares a PowerPoint presentation on a topic in their subject of specialization.
4. **Portal:** It helps in integrating useful links to websites, online research based journals, etc.
5. **Common e-mail ids:** For each course for asynchronous access of hand outs, communications, photos, etc; Use of computers for transactional analysis by teacher educators: For preparing the brochures, Academic Calendars, time tables of theory, practicum, circulars and notices about the co-curricular activities, etc., all the concerned teachers prepare and communicate through e-mail to the Principal, faculty and the clerical staff.
6. **Collaboration with industry :** Writing Lesson Plans for Tata Interactive System(TIS) and their review.

2. SETTING UP A CULTURE OF LIFE-LONG EDUCATION AND BUILDING A LEARNING SOCIETY

- *Teachers* should be trained to be the guides and facilitators of learning, adopt constructivist and cooperative instructional strategies to develop the skill of learning to learn among children. For that we believe that teacher educators have to be lifelong learners and develop the same attitude in their pre-service teachers.
- **Life-long Education** : In order to provide more opportunities to become lifelong learner our college is also a study centre for IGNOU and YCMOU. The College is presently offering Master of Education (M Ed) and Post Graduate Diploma in Management of Education (PGDME) and M. A. in Education of YCMOU. and M. A. in Education and M. Ed of IGNOU.
- **Developing the Skill of Learning to Learn**: The M.Ed as well as B.Ed is divided into groups of six students and each is given a comparatively easier topic for self study. The different aspects of the topic are to be distributed among the team members. A weekly seminar in each subject is held and every week a particular group presents their papers. Each team member are given 5 minutes to present the paper. At the end of the session, discussion and consolidation are done by the subject teacher. This makes the students active learners; develops implicit competition to excel, in addition to developing communication skills and presentation skills
- **Deputing Teachers for Seminars and Workshops**: Whenever the teachers are deputed to seminars and workshops, they are made to share their inputs with the staff members and the HOI discuss with the faculty about benefiting from the inputs from those seminars and workshop by chalking out action plan. This procedure is strictly adhered to, so as to benefit all the faculty members from individual experiences.
- **Faculty Forums**: Once in a month, 2-3 hours on a Saturday are earmarked for Faculty Forums. (Students are given library reference periods)A week in advance, a circular is distributed allotting topics/research reviews in books or journals to the faculty members. Each faculty members review the topics/research study in a book or journal and make a presentation for about 5 to 10 minutes. Handouts are circulated to all the faculty members. The documentation of the proceedings is seriously maintained as in the case of the minutes of staff meeting/LMC. This yields greater dividends in the form of updating of knowledge with minimum efforts and in a minimum amount of time in addition to developing team spirit.

3. STRENGTHENING THE MANAGERIAL AND STAFF TRAINING FOR DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization has set challenges for all and also for teachers .We should be able to unlearn and relearn so as to cope with the ever changing technology. Teachers have to be trained for change management, stress management and total quality management. For this following measure can be undertaken:

- **Performance Based Incentives**: In order to motivate the faculty to excel, the management decides to give awards/appreciation letters/cash prizes/additional increments to the deserving candidates. Promotion to the next scale should specify certain conditions which are geared towards professional growth such as presenting papers, innovative methods of teaching, conducting a required numbers of seminars workshops etc, research and publications.
- **HOI Leadership Training Program**: For principals and HOI, programmes on transformational leadership, teaching learning process and assessment and building world class institutions such aspects are covered.
- **Designing Induction programs for newly recruited teachers**: The College has taken following measures in this regards-The newly recruited faculty are oriented to the different academic activities of the program. They are given thorough guidance for each and every responsibility to be shouldered by them. The newly recruited teachers are mentored by the senior faculty members. The new teaching techniques and devices are taught to them by the senior faculty members.

4. PROMOTING REFLECTIVE PRACTICES:

Reflective practice can be a beneficial process in teacher professional development, both for pre-service and in-service teachers. The teacher educator as researcher and role model should encourage students to put theories they've learned into practice in their classrooms. Teacher educators can most effectively coach student teachers in reflective practice by using students' personal histories, dialogue journals, and small and large-group discussions about their experiences to help students reflect upon and improve their practices. By gaining a better understanding of their own individual teaching styles through reflective practice, teachers can improve their effectiveness in the classroom.

- **SWOT Analysis:** Analysis is done by each staff member in the beginning of the academic year. That is teachers and the non-teaching staff should introspect and reflect on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and should state them in clear terms. This information is used by the Principal to allocate portfolios.
- **Goal Setting:** In the beginning of the academic year, every teacher is asked to set goals for himself/herself and submit that document to the Principal. In this, they also include an action plan to convert their weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities. The teachers' self evaluation at the end of the year is prepared w.r.t the goals set by themselves, which speaks for itself the extent to which they have achieved their goals.
- **Students' Evaluation:** At the end of each teaching session, at least 10 minutes are devoted for asking questions about what has been taught – questions to test their knowledge, understanding and application the subject matter taught. This not only makes the students accountable for their learning but also gives feed back to the teachers as to how far they are successful in achieving in their instructional objectives.
- **Students' appraisal of the teachers:** This is also recorded and analyzed and considered along with the self appraisal of teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The educational community should: Move away from past models of professional development (where it took place only on in-service days, weekends, or during the summer) to new models that embed professional development into the daily lives of teachers.

Restructure teachers' work to create the mental space necessary for ongoing professional development. Assess how current professional development resources are being used and design strategies for securing additional resources as needed or for reallocating them. Develop strategies for informing and convincing the public and policymakers that professional development not only is critical but also is as much a part of teachers' work as instruction.

CONCLUSION:

The core areas of capacity building for education should include: establishing - institutional frame-work, engaging personnel with required skill sets and experience and upgrading internal skill sets through training. This paper can be summarized as I believe for professional development the mission of teacher educators should be quality teacher education to enlighten, emancipate and empower the student-teacher fraternity and to foster lifelong learning.

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