

## Analysis of Government Primary In-Service Teachers Training Programs with Reference to Curriculum Delivery

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### Abstract

One of the main purposes of this research study was to evaluate the difference aspects of Primary School teachers (PSTs) 12000 program with respect to relevance of content and teaching and teaching pedagogies to teacher's professional requirements. The issue and challenges while implementing the training program in the province of Sindh and existing support (monitoring and follow up) mechanism have also been critically examined. The research was designed in a qualitative paradigm; individual interviews, focus group discussions, monitoring visits and documents analysis were used to explore the realities and the finding were triangulated. The research participants were primary school teachers, master trainers, course directors, district educators, and district education officers. Major findings from the study revealed that the PST 12000 in-service Teacher's Training Program was launched in 2003 under ADP scheme with an amount Rs. 76.36 million. Under PST 12000 program 9735 teachers, (51% male and 49% female) have been trained. The data collected from group discussion was consolidated. The revealed that before the start of the program no any required assessment survey was conducted. It was found the program improved upon teacher's content knowledge but it did not help them design activities (teaching material) according to the needs of diverse learners. The findings related to master trainers (MTs) showed that the subjects such as English, Maths and science were taught by those MTs who did not have specific qualifications (i.e. Master degree in Science, Maths or English). Although MTs content knowledge about their subject was the satisfactory, yet it was difficult for them to develop teaching resources and design activities according to the level of their learners (i.e. PST) majority of MTs only used textbooks as a teaching material, only a few MTs were seen with supplementary material. The finding related to course directors to conduct training program. The course directors only focused on the attainment of quantitative targets instead of improving the quality of teaching and learners process. The analysis of interviews conducted with district officers' education showed that there was communication gap between DOE (academic & Training), ADOE, SPE and teachers. The data further indicates that

the District Education Department had no mechanism For Following up the teachers after training. The data collected from monitoring visits indicated that, most of the centers, lacked basic facilities such as OHP, sufficient computers, Science laboratories and well-equipped classrooms. The subject of IT is taught without computers. If the computers were there then a large number was out of order. Majority of the monitoring officers agreed that the content delivered was according to aims and objectives of the training program but it was difficult for MTs to integrate this content with particular pedagogy. In the light of the finding, the study recommended the conduct of a required assessment survey before the start of a new training, revision of training manuals according to new curriculum promotion of action research in all teachers' training program programs, increase in the budget for activities, arrangement of trainings for MTs according to new curriculum, 100% increase in the remuneration of PSTs, Master trainers and course directors. In order to create interest and an environment of competition in the training program Course Participants should be giving some kind of awards/ best performance certificates. There is a need to develop follow up support mechanism for teachers who have got training. In this regard, PITE and district education department should work together.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Evaluation, Primary School Teacher (PST), Implementation, In-service Training, Monitoring, PST 12000 Program.

### **Introduction**

Teacher education is an integral part any education system. The National Education Policies of Pakistan have emphasized that teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service components are inseparable.

The role of teacher is independence in implementing educational policies and reforms. Owing to this reason, teachers' professional development is widely recognized. Continuing professional development helps teachers in improving upon their classroom practices. It is universally recognized that teachers' professional education does not finish at the end of initial training. There is need and demand that teachers should informed about the patterns and method, because teachers alone cannot cope with emerging and continuing flood of new theories, provide them opportunities to attend in-service training programs. The world Education forum (2000) says that education is a life-long process of learning. Continuous Professional development through in-service training to up-date the teacher's knowledge and teaching methods is of crucial importance in providing quality education.

There is no doubt that in-service training programs have been in presence since so many years. One of the reasons of not having any impact of these courses embedded in fact that little research has been done to determine the impact of pedagogical content knowledge of teachers and impact students' learning have serious implications for policy.

The present in-services teachers education programs are not up to mark of the present day needs of society. Bonstingl (1992) has rightly portrayed the picture of Pakistani in-service teacher education programs by saying that in these training programs, teachers give students data and information and students memorize it. There is single disciplined instruction in a teacher education classroom. In these training programs, instruction is set up to generate right answers and learning is restricted to prescribed curriculum. The Policy Document issued by the ministry of education, Government of Pakistan, confirms that the present in-service training programs show that teachers' understanding about content and methods has proven to be shallow. There is a need to bridge the gap between teachers' theoretical knowledge and real classroom practices. The curriculum of these programs fails

to develop in teachers the required pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, classroom delivery and questioning skills that would make these courses worthwhile.

The problem to be investigated is of immense importance. The findings of the study will help policy-makers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators in designing future in-service training courses for teachers and teacher trainers. The study will be helpful in bringing healthy changes in the nature of existing in-service teacher training courses. The study will add a new body of knowledge not for me as a teacher educator but also for teacher training institutions in Sindh in terms of designing new courses. The findings will be helpful for the teacher education institutions to make in-service teachers' courses need-based and more effective.

According to Pakistan Education Statistics (2004-05) report, at present 95730 primary school teachers are working in the province of Sindh. Majority of them are having gone through their basic & first professional development program i.e. primary Teaching Certificate Course (PTC). Some In-Service Training programs are organized for teachers at various levels regularly through province and federal Government Annual Development programs the numbers of programs always depend upon the budget sanctioned by the respective ministry/ Department for this purpose. The PST 12000 program was one of the schemes whose funding was provided from the Government of Sindh, education & literacy Department. In this paper I have evaluation PST 12000 Program with reference to curriculum delivery and monitoring practices.

### **Key Features of PST 12000 Program**

The Government of Sindh Education & Literacy Department, Karachi Approved a scheme ADP-179 / 2002-2003 "In service Training of 12000 newly recruited and existing primary school Teachers (PSTs) in Sindh" with a total cost of Rs.76.360 Million during the period 2003-2004. The In service Training program of 12000 PSTs was started in 2003, thus two round of the program have already been Completed in 16 districts during 2003-04 and 2004-5. Third round 2005-6 of the training program was started in November 2005. At the end of third cycle that was completed November 2005, PITE Sindh has trained were 1257. At the end of April 2007, the numbers of total teachers trained were 9735.

The implementation strategy of the PST 12000 Program includes:

- 1 Selection of Experts/ Resource Persons
- 2 Development of training Material
- 3 Selection of Master Training
- 4 Conduct of Orientation Program for Master trainers:
- 5 Selection of primary School Teaching Program(PSTs):
- 6 Conduct of training program
- 7 Monitoring of Training program

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this paper is to examine the following inputs:

- To evaluate the delivery of curriculum, instructional support and new initiatives:  
To identify strengths and weaknesses un t Existing monitoring practices:
- To Examine How Existing monitoring practices help Education Department in effective Implementation of the program activities.

**Method and Design**

This research has been designed in a qualitative paradigm. The qualitative research is conducted in natural setting rather than controlled ones, and tries to make meaning of social phenomena, and it relies on varieties of data with the outcomes or products (Rossman and (Bogdan& Biklen, 1992).

The participants of the research study were categorized into four groups:

- a. Primary school Teacher (PSTs)
- b. Master trainers (MTs)/ Teachers Trainers

S.No	Nature of Activity	Respondent group Involved	Criteria for Selection	Nature of data Acquired
1	Focus Group Discussion	30 primary school teachers (15 male+ 15 Female) from District Nawabshah	-Teacher who have attended PST 12000 program in the year 2003-2005 at PITE Nawabshah	-Perceptions of teachers about the effectiveness of the program- Challenges faced while implementing learning -Future professional needs
2	Focus Group Discussion	18 Master Trainer, each 2 in one subject (9 Male+ 9 Female)	MTs who have taught teachers throughout the program	-Perceptions of MTs about different dimensions of the PST 12000 program -Issues and challenges -Future Training Needs
3	Focus Group Discussion	Course Directors 30(20 Male+ 10 Females	This group includes Principles of GECEs. DOEs and senior faculty members	-Sharing previous reflections of teachers/ MTs about the effectiveness of the program -Issues of implementations -Existing capacity (Availability Of human and material resources)
4	Individual Discussion /Interview	District Government Officials	This Group comprised of EDO/ ADOE(Education) of district Nawabshah	-Monitoring Strategies - How to develop Follow up mechanism

- c. Course Directors (CDs)
- d. District government functionaries.

## **Data Collection Plan**

### Research Instruments

#### *Focus Group Discussion*

One of the methods of collecting information is arranging the focus group discussion. Focused groups are useful in obtaining a particular kind of information that would be difficult to obtain using other methodologies. Kairuz, Crump & O'Brien (2007) elaborate that focused groups are described as group discussions that are used to identify and explore perceptions and thoughts of a specified group of individuals with regard to a specific topic and area of interest (p.271). In order to elicit the views of different stakeholders about the effectiveness of the program, a focused group discussion was arranged at PITE Sindh Nawabshah.

#### **Individual Interviews**

The data was supplemented by secondary sources of data i.e. Conducting interviews: individual discussion with executive district officer (Education), District officer Education, assistant district officer education. The interview will be semi-structured in order to get deeper understanding of the situation. Hitchcock & Hughes (1994) say "the semi-structured interview is a much more flexible version of the structured interview".

The reason to conduct individual meetings with district government officials was embedded in the fact that these officials remained busy; it was very difficult to gather them. At the same time and at the same place.

#### **Documents Analysis**

The material recording existing in-service teachers' training programs was selected from the bureau of curriculum and extension wing, Jamshoro and provincial institute of teacher education (PITE) Sindh Nawabshah and national education policies of Pakistan with reference to teacher education were reviewed.

#### **Data Analysis**

Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others (Bogdan & Beklin, 1992). Data analysis in this study was an ongoing process. It did not occur at the end of the study. We make sense in the process of data analysis; it is a tedious but an exhilarating process. Rossman and Marshall (1994) state "Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data" (p.111).

#### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study was delimited to:

1. Primary school teachers, Master trainers, Course and district education functionaries who have been working for / in Education & Literacy Department in the province of Sindh.
2. Primary school teachers who have attended in-service training programs during the years 2002-2005 in district Nawabshah.
3. Course directors, Master trainers who have been nominated by the team of experts from time to time spread over the whole province of Sindh.

## Discussion

### *Finding Pertaining to Group Discussions and Interviews Conducted*

The participants were divided into four groups i.e. course directors district educational managers, Masters Trainers and course participations. Different task were assigned to each group.

From the group discussion, it can be concluded that;

It was a challenging experience for course Directors to conduct training program. From obtaining the list / nomination of teacher from district education department to execution of the program, CDs faced to lots of challenges these challenges include:

- Delayed nominations of PSTs for training program
  - Lack of interest of district education authorities in informing PSTs
  - Instead of facilitating CDs in smooth running of the program, the district education authorities hardly visit any center. They all the time inquired about the TAs / Das which were supposed to pay teachers.
  - It was very difficult CDs to meet the requirements of MTs with respect to stationary/ Charts markers because the amount of Rs. 2000 was not enough for managing activities in all subjects.
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- Most of the centers lacked basic facilities such as OHP, sufficient computers and science laborites and well-equipped classrooms. The subject of IT is taught without computers. If the PCs were there then a large number was out of order.
  - The CDs supposed to do lot of work, candidly spearing, a major amount of only Rs. 2000/ was paid to them for conducting one training program.
  - Most of the time course directors (CDs) visited the classes just to check the regularity and punctuality of the class, and to see at what extent course has been covered. They never thought whether the skills of teachers were improving or not? In other words, they had no idea about measuring the effectiveness of the program.
  - With respect to monitoring of the program, the course director responded that only persons who were nominated by PITE visited the centres. The district education authorities hardly visited the centre.
  - Subjects such as English, Maths and Science were taught by those MTs who did not have specific qualification ( i.e Mater degree in Science , Mtahs or English)
  - Although MTs content knowledge about their subject was satisfactory yet it was difficult for them to develop teaching resources and design activities according to the level of their learners (i.e. PST)
  - Majority of MTs only used textbooks as a teaching material, only a few MTs were seen with supplementary material.
  - The role of Course Director was very important. He should not be only academically and administratively strong but also be able to provide professional support to MTs and Teachers. In the case of PST 12000 Program, CDs whole attention was revolved around ensuring attendance and arranging refreshments only.
  - There was lack of scientific / material at training venues. Science was taught without conducting pay practical work.
  - District Education authorities should monitor this material and provide necessary support for further developing.
  - Participating should be provided an opportunity for Team teaching

- Majority of teachers had rare opportunities for professional development.
- Teacher looked anxious for their professional development but due to lack of funds for teachers' trainings with District government, teachers hardly got these opportunities ever. Teachers looked at PITE for any professional development opportunity.
- Before the start of the Program, no any required assessment survey was conducted.
- Majority of teachers showed their interest in IT, Mathematics, English and Science.
- The PST 12000 program improved upon teachers' subject knowledge but it did not help them in designing activities for the diverse group of learners. Teacher still need training in making instructional material.
- There is a communication gap between DOE (Academic & Training), ADOE, SPE and teachers. Whatever orders/directives issued from DOE (A & T) were suspended due to unknown reasons or the officers passed on the orders very late to their subordinate. The existing hierarchy was the main reason behind this delay.
- It has been found that the team of district officers were unable to provide their academic and professional support to teachers while the training was in progress. There were two possibilities; either these officers were not aware of their professional responsibilities or there was a lack of responsibility and commitment among them.
- The officers of district education department had not attended any training program that could help them assess the professional needs of their teachers and support them in their professional development.
- The District Education Department had no mechanism for following up the teachers after the completion of their training. According to haque, k., Rahman, k., & Bhuiyan, S.(2003) "A follow up program can become an important part of ongoing professional development for these teachers to ensure sustainability of Professional development and school improvement efforts."

### **Findings Pertaining to Monitoring Visits**

During the conduct of the training program, monitoring was the part to see the inputs. The Monitoring officers made surprise visits. In the light of the reports submitted, following analysis is made:

- The attendance of master trainers, course participants and supporting staff was very satisfactory.
- Majority of the monitoring officers agreed that the content delivered was according to aims and objectives of the training program.
- Although MTs used group work as a teaching strategy yet there is need to be aware the real sprit of the group work. Just gathering different people and asking them to share their views does not guarantee that group work is going on.
- Teachers were enthusiastic to share their views to monitoring officers.
- Material developed was not displayed in the class.
- Most of the time teachers were only dependent on the textbooks, there was not any supplementary material used.
- Even though most of the Monitoring officers were from district education department, yet PITE had not received any proposed plan for follow up of the

trainees. The MOs did not share what kind of support they would provide to their teachers for the effective implementation of the program.

### Suggestions

Based on the group work and sharing of ideas in the general session and in the light of monitoring officers' reports, the following suggestions were made to Education & Literacy Department, Govt. of Sindh for effective implementation of the professional development activities in the Provinces of Sindh:

1. Before the start of a new training program a required assessment, survey should be conducted. UNESCO (2006) Endorses that courses are not designed according to the requirements of in-service teachers.
2. Increase the remuneration of PSTs from Rs.80/ per day to Rs.200/ per day. The remuneration of MTs should be Rs.500 per hour and the remuneration of CD should be Rs.1000 per program.
3. Revision of manuals according to new curriculums.
4. Increase the budget for activities.
5. Arrange the training for MTs according to new curriculum.
6. Teaching material developed at centers should be given to teacher for future use in schools.
7. There is a need to promote action research in all teacher' training programs, this will make teaching systematic.
8. Majority of the trainees suggested increasing the duration of the training.
9. The trainees suggested allocation of more time for English and computer.
10. It was suggested that the material of the training should be provided to trainees in advance to help trainees get prepared.
11. Provision of Overhead projector (OHP) at all the centers should be as far as possible.
12. Monitoring teams suggested providing specific training to the course directors at each center.
13. The trainees should be informed through different modes of communication at least one week before starting the course to ensure their participation from the first day of program.
14. In order to create interest and an environment of competition in the training program CPs should be given some kind of awards/ best performer certificate on the basis of their participation, were can interest UNESCO (2006) in its teacher analysis report confirms that there is dire need for recognition of performance and government should declare weightage for teachers for additional qualification. Craig (1998) confirms that such incentives can be monetary (Salary increase, Allowances, and benefits). They can also include subsidized housing. Food, transport facilities, professional training, teacher guides textbook personal notebook, location, and recognition of performance match up initiative according to the needs and stage of the teacher.
15. It is suggested to develop follow up mechanism between PITE Sindh and district education department UNESCO (2006) advocates such kind of support for teachers and says that almost all training programs lack of systematic follow up to gauge the performance of trained teacher. It further says that systematic follow up with the teachers after training is central to their professional development.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of teachers' professional development is widely recognized. Professional developments are launched without having done necessary- assessment. The pedagogy of professional development must be learner-centered. PST 12000 program was a good initiative for the professional development of teachers it achieved its quantitative targets excellently if PITE Sindh intends to improve the quality of service teachers training programs then it should bear in the mind the suggestions that have been discussed earlier.

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