

PERCEPTION OF COLLEGE TEACHERS TOWARDS TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS IN INDIA

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Abstract:

In India, as per the guidelines of the University Grant Commission all the Assistant Professors shall undergo minimum four (one Orientation and three Refresher Courses) training courses during their career period to get qualified for status and pay scales. The present study is conducted to assess the effectiveness of the training courses, trainers' competency and the course contents taught during the course period. The required data and information were collected from the teachers, who attended the training courses in various Staff Academic Colleges at different universities. The opinion survey of Orientation Courses, which consists of multi-discipline subject trainers and multi-discipline participants revealed distorted results towards the effectiveness of training. The outcome of survey gave mixed response, hence, one can not give exact judgement about the competency of trainers and subjects taught by them. The perception of Assistant Professors towards the first and the second Refresher Courses expressed by the participants observed to be more genuine and balanced, especially the experience shared by the teachers trainees of the third Refresher Course.

Key Words: Training Effectiveness, Perception, Orientation, Refresher, Education.

I. Introduction:

In India, the University Grant Commission (UGC) came into existence in 1953 by the Act of Indian Parliament for co-ordination, determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in higher education. The UGC is a statutory organization of the Government of India for higher education system. As per the guidelines of UGC all the Assistant Professors shall undergo minimum four training courses during their career period to get qualified for status and pay scales. Every Assistant Professor shall complete two training courses (one Orientation and one Refresher of 2 to 3 weeks at stage first to stage second and again one more Refresher Course of 2 to 3 weeks at stage second to third. Further, to get promotion from stage third to stage fourth as Associate Professor, the teacher shall complete one Refresher Course of the same duration or any other type of training specified by the UGC under Career Advancement Scheme (CAS). Here after the Assistant Professors and Associate Professors referred as AsPs and AcPs respectively.

II. Methodology:

The present study is conducted to assess the effectiveness of the training courses, the competency of trainers and the relevance of course contents taught during the course period. The required data and information were collected from the teachers, who attended the training courses at various Staff Academic Colleges (SAC) at different universities. The study covered a sample size of 20 AsPs, who attended Orientation Courses and a group of 20 AsPs, who attended Refresher Courses and group of 20 AcPs, who attended the third Refresher Courses. All these teacher trainees were from colleges, who teach under graduate programme of general education in different states in India.

III. Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyze the perception of the Assistant Professors and Associate Professors towards the compulsory training courses and effectiveness, which they undergone during their career period.
2. To find out the competency of trainers and the relevance of course contents taught by the trainers during the training sessions.

IV. Findings:

(A) Perception of AsPs towards Orientation Course.

- (i) Majority (90%) of the trainers observed to have come from the teaching field of the higher education, either from reputed colleges or universities. The selection of the teacher as trainers done by the organizers is the pivotal point of training effectiveness, which was taken care.
- (ii) Majority (85%) of the sessions of the courses were highly interactive and activity based sessions. The pure science courses, especially computer science participants observed to have given their opinion in positive manner. The participants of social science subjects observed that most (60%) of the sessions were interactive and the rest were knowledge sharing of recent developments in their respective fields.
- (iii) Many (35%) trainers used video clips to support their claims, impart knowledge which increased the effectiveness of the training sessions.
- (iv) The trainers motivated each and every teacher trainee to participate in deliberation, share their opinions and give their concluding remarks towards the recent developments, new concepts introduced in their subjects and matter discussed. The trainer accepted negative as well as positive analysis of the matter taught and the concept explained during the sessions.
- (v) The trainers motivation lead to more and effective participation, which generated final outcome of creative thinking, modification and improvement in the subject matters. Here also it is the opinions of pure science AsPs. A few from social science AsPs opined the same. The feedback given by the

AsPs of pure science and social science observed a wide deviation in feedback of Orientation Courses.

- (vi) The feedback given by the teacher trainee towards the Orientation Courses were observed to be more distorted in nature, since the teacher participants were from different programme (pure science as well as from social science) and from different subjects. The trainers were also from teaching fraternity and from corporate world, NGO etc. Hence, the participants' responses towards some questions were more or less equally distributed. On an average an equal number of participants marked all the parameters - very effective, somewhat effective, somewhat ineffective and ineffective. The presentation made by the science and social science trainers may be good, but the lack of interest in such subjects observed among the participants. This may be one of the reasons lead to confused opinions. Hence, the training should be given to homogeneous group rather than heterogeneous group, in terms of course core values are concerned.
- (vii) Few (2%) trainers observed to have been using the same presentation which they prepared some years back, especially resource persons from NGOs. They might have brought the same presentation may be lack of time to prepare or due to emergency adjustment made by the organizers to fill the gap of regular one's absence.
- (viii) Overall the AsPs participants of Orientation Courses have given mixed responses towards the training with wide deviation from mean point.

(B) Perception of AsPs towards 1st and 2nd Refresher Course.

- (i) The teacher trainees who attended 1st and 2nd Refresher Courses have given more number of positive remarks towards the trainers as well the subject matters covered during the sessions.
- (ii) The opinion given by the AsPs in affirmative manner may be due to homogeneity in terms of subjects relevancy and interest of the participants in the matters taught.
- (iii) It is observed that the organizers have selected trainers from both teaching fraternity and corporate world, especially chief executive officers. Also observed that more number of trainers were teachers and that too from universities, who were dealing with advance study materials and research work in their subjects and in their respective universities.
- (iv) Since these AsPs have already undergone one Orientation training (some of them even completed first Refresher course also) and gained experience of four to six years of teaching, observed to have given a moderate opinion towards trainers and the course contents taught during the Refresher courses.

(v) The objections about unprepared trainers and the matters presented, which prepared some years back, were still observed by the teacher trainees on which the directors of Staff Academic Colleges of universities do not have much control on them, other than posting the feedback given by the trainees to them for reference and not to repeat again in due course.

(C) Perception of AcPs towards 3rd Refresher Course.

- (i) Since this group has already undergone three training (one Orientation Course and two Refresher Courses) and gained experience of teaching and shouldering responsibilities of various committees, cells, departments etc., in colleges, treated as matured group and the opinion given by them as more genuine. A few observed to have influenced by professional 'ego', might be after acquiring multi degrees or doctoral degree, observed have always given their opinion in non-affirmative manner, almost for every question.
- (ii) The opinion and judgment level towards the trainers' competency and the course content taught to AcPs observed to be more accurate backed by sincerity in preparation of session contents.
- (iii) Majority (75%) of AcPs felt that content presented by the trainers were very good and training were more effective. The rest (25%) opined that the trainers have not delivered as per their expectation.
- (iv) So far subjects were concerned, AcPs told that it is somewhat acceptable for them. The advance topics and knowledge imparted by trainers would help them in creativity in teaching, lesson plan designing and delivery in classroom.
- (v) A few sessions on teaching platforms (Moodle, MS 365 etc.), really improved their skill and practical knowledge.
- (vi) A few presentation on research paper writing observed to be more effective. Almost cent percent felt that they feel to write research proposals and those who were writing research proposals felt that they can write more effectively after the training.
- (vii) Industrial executives trainers could not win the hearts of AcPs, opined that it is a wasteful efforts to train educational professionals, many time irrelevant matters were discussed by them.
- (viii) Every academic trainer shall focus on latest curriculum contents to be taught to the target group shall prepare well and deliver to the trainees.
- (ix) As the qualification and experience moves upward from AsPs to AcPs, the degree of effectiveness of training observed to have shown inverse trend of interest, zeal, enthusiasm and keenness among the teacher trainees of educational galaxy.

V. Conclusions:

The opinion survey of Orientation courses, which consists of multi-discipline subject trainers and multi-discipline participants revealed distorted results towards the effectiveness of training. The outcome of survey gave mixed response, hence, one can not give exact judgement about the competency of trainers and the relevance of subjects taught to AsPs.

The perception of AsPs towards the first and the second Refresher Courses expressed by the participants observed to be more genuine and balanced, especially expressed by the trainees of the third Refresher Course.

When these college teachers go back to their respective colleges after the training they act as trainers to train their students (trainees), the acquired additional knowledge and training experience would multiply their skill and knowledge contents higher than any professional trainer. Since all college teachers act as trainers every day in their class rooms and attend compulsory training in their career as trainee, such teachers can very well judge the competency of trainers and effectiveness of any training. The collective conceptualization of the college teachers can be taken as base for assessment. This might be the cause that the AcPs responded many of the questions negatively.

VI. Limitations of the Study:

- i. Since the study is conducted with a small group of AsPs and AcPs, the opinions of the college teacher trainees should not be generalized as opinions of the entire undergraduate teaching fraternity of India.
- ii. A sincere effort is made to analyze the training effectiveness, the quality of trainers and course core contents taught during the training sessions. No claim should be made that the perception of sample group is the opinion of higher education teachers in India.

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Conflict of Interest

The author certifies that he has no affiliation with the any teachers' or trainers' association/ organizations taken for study nor any financial or any non-financial interest in the subject matter discussed in this manuscript.

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