



ISSN: 2278 – 0211 (Online)

A SWOT Analysis: An Effective Technique To Analyse Teachers' Initiatives In Professional Development Programme

Dr. Meenu Singh

Assistant Professor, Faculty Of Education, Dayalbagh Educational Institute
(Deemed University), Dayalbagh, Agra, India

Sangeeta Singh

M.Ed. Student, Faculty Of Education, Dayalbagh Educational Institute
(Deemed University), Dayalbagh, Agra, India

Abstract:

Teaching at the higher level is more than mere dissemination of knowledge or classroom teaching. The most important job of teacher is to initiate the students into uncharted areas of knowledge both through keeping themselves abreast of the new developments in their area of specialization and through professional activities, like writing in journals or attending conferences or through understanding research on their own. Also, the person needs to have undergone advanced professional education. It embraces personal development and staff development, the collegiality of the group. With growing stress on performance-based measurements of academic accomplishment; and escalating attack on the research task of higher educational institutions it is time to see what measures are being adopted by university teachers to realize their obligations towards their institutions and towards their professional development? Thus the main objectives of the study were to investigate whether teachers understand the concept of Professional Development and Teacher Initiatives, to identify the need of Professional Development in the teaching profession and to study the opinion of the university teachers regarding strength, weakness, opportunities and threats in their professional development. Descriptive survey method and SWOT analysis techniques were applied for the study. The simple random sampling method was used to select 60 teachers from Dayalbagh Educational Institute and Ambedkar University. Percentage was calculated on the basis of frequencies. The results indicated that the teachers are well aware of the concept of professional development and teachers' initiative. The opinion regarding the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat of professional development were also given by the teachers.

1.Introduction

University teaching in India in the present century has been regarded as more than an occupation. It is called a profession which means that the primary task of academic proficiency is the acquisition and transmission of knowledge and application of knowledge. But the changing character of institutes of higher education no longer justifies the strict dichotomy between knowledge transmission and knowledge application. Since university education is the chief means through which students get initiated into the professions of Science, Social Sciences, English, medicine etc. the university teacher ought to be professional since he/she is called upon to teach the others. The university teacher is expected to be a member of the community of researchers whose efforts are directed towards extending the frontiers of knowledge. This makes the role of the teacher an authentic one.

Professional development is a deliberate and a continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual self for furthering "their job satisfaction, and career prospects and of the institution for supporting academic works and plans and the implementation of programs of staff activities designed or the harmonious satisfaction of needs. (Billings, 1977). Thus, the process of development caters both to the individual needs of the teachers and the whole institution.

Time to time the emphasis has been laid on professional development by the education commissions and the surveys are also conducted in the concerned areas just to observe the status. Keeping in view the priorities important in higher education teachers, a survey was conducted in 1983 by the II nd National Commission on education and was found that the teachers were concerned more with the security value, salaries, promotions etc. rather than the professional values, which the teachers should possess. Their concern for promoting academic excellence, raising academic standards, readiness to reform and innovate etc. were not found satisfactory. The commission recommended drastic improvement of service conditions and opportunities for professional growth. They felt that teachers ought to respond by showing greater professionalism keeping in mind the guidelines enumerated by the IInd National Commission. The UGC has made compulsory for college and university teachers to take an active part for their professional development. The researcher is keen to know the sub-areas of the professional development taken by the teachers' viz., Intellectual, Attitudinal and Functional development. For which SWOT analysis method was employed. A SWOT analysis method focuses on the internal and external environments, where strengths and

weaknesses are examined as internal environment and opportunities and threats are examined as the external environment.

2.Objectives Of The Study

The objectives of the study were:

- To investigate whether teachers understand the concept of Professional Development and Teachers' Initiatives.
- To identify the need of Professional Development in teaching profession.
- To study the opinion of the university teachers regarding strength, weakness, opportunities and threats in their professional development.

3.Methods Of The Study

The methods used for this study were:

- Descriptive Survey Method.
- Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat Analysis

4.Selection Of The Samples

- This study included the population of 60 teachers from Ambedkar University and Dayalbagh Educational Institute.
- The random sampling technique was used for the selection of this sample.

5.Statistical Techniques

- Percentage was calculated on the basis of frequencies.

6.Findings Of The Study

The findings are systematically arranged in accordance with the objectives as discussed below:

- Finding 'related to the objective 1- To investigate whether teachers understand the concept of Professional Development and Teacher Initiatives.

The ideas collected regarding objective- I reveal that the responses and ideas given by different teachers are very close to the operational definition. The teachers are aware of the concept of professional development and teachers initiatives. University teachers accepted the professional development as- the personality development, self improvement, development of the skills to impart quality education, development of problem solving skill, decision making skill, communication skill, all round development, development of confidence and morality etc. This is shown in Table – 1.

S. No.	Responses of the teacher	Percentage (%)
1	Self improvement	76%
2	Development of teaching skills with modern audio visual aids	66%
3	Skill development e.g. analytical skills, problem solving decision making skill, communication skill	65%
4	Development of subject knowledge	63%
5	All round development	57%
6	Knowledge of latest techniques	51%
7	Personality development	45%
8	Imparting quality education	45%
9	Development of values and pedagogy	42%
10	Development of confidence and morality	38%
11	Writing research papers in journals and undertaking new projects etc.	21%
12	Improvement in level of understanding	12%
Total No. of teachers = 60		

Table 1: Shows The Responses Of The Teachers Regarding Concept Of Professional Development

The table shows the responses of the teachers about the concept of professional development.

Similarly, the various ideas were received from University teachers regarding the concept and the types of work helpful in teachers' initiatives. The responses reveal that it is an independent effort which the teacher takes for his/her academic and professional growth, it is must to bring change and take initiatives which will help them to develop their personal/professional skills etc. For some teachers it is to attend conferences, seminars; courses offered by U.G.C., some regard it as the voluntary steps taken for self-improvement and self-development. According to some, it is to take initiatives to learn new techniques and new knowledge. Table – 2 shows the responses of the teachers regarding teachers' initiatives.

S. No.	Responses of the teacher	Percentage (%)
1	Voluntary steps taken for self-improvement and self-development	82%
2	To attend conferences, seminars and courses offered by U.G.C.	81%
3	Taking steps to develop teaching skills	74%

S. No.	Responses of the teacher	Percentage (%)
4	Taking classes for providing quality education	64%
5	Taking initiatives to learn new techniques and new knowledge	58%
6	Responsibility for the betterment of the students	58%
7	Update with recent advancement and activities in the concerned field	46%
8	Attending programs for harmonious development of personality	45%
9	Doing research activities	33%
10	Integration of theory and practice which reforms actions	30%
Total No. of teachers = 60		

Table 2: Shows The Responses Of The Teachers Regarding Concept Of Teachers' Initiatives

- Finding related to the objective 2 – To identify the need of Professional Development in teaching profession.

For this objective an open ended questionnaire was given to 60 teachers to get the opinion of the teachers which included the two items of the same idea, such as “Why should a teacher take initiatives to develop herself/himself”? And ‘Why is professional development needed in teaching profession?’

With the help of obtained data, it was found that the professional development was needed to build a prosperous society by educating the people, to serve mankind, to face new challenges. Also, some mentioned that for self esteem self improvement, for knowing the new changes taking place and for individual and institutional development because a great section of society wants to maintain the prestige and decorum of their career among their colleagues. If they do not take initiatives they are unable to adjust in their working place. Table – 3 shows the responses of the teacher.

S. No.	Responses of the teacher	Percentage (%)
1	For self esteem/self reformation	85%
2	To know the new changes taking place	78%
3	To inculcate value system	66%
4	For enhancement of knowledge	65%
5	To be a role model for future nation builder	57%
6	To teach properly	55%
7	For adopting practical approach	53%
8	To improve decision making skills	49%
9	For individual and institutional development	48%
10	To build a prosperous society by educating the people	40%
11	For self motivation-self styled leader, confidence	37%
12	To impart right type of knowledge at the right time	31%
13	For realization efficiency and excellence	30%
14	To face new challenges	26%
15	To undertake research projects leading to consultancy	23%
16	To serve mankind	22%
17	To encourage students	16%
18	All round development	12%

Table 3: Responses Show ‘Why Is There Need To Take Initiatives For Professional Development’

- Findings related to the objective – 3: To study the opinion of the university teachers regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in their professional development.

The opinion of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses in teachers’ initiatives and their professional development is given in table - 4.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Writing articles in journals	• Ignorance/lack of knowledge of the subject
• Strong technical & subject knowledge within the field	• Unawareness regarding technological facilities available to them
• Good qualification and good teaching habits	• Laziness in updating knowledge and teaching notes
• Participation in face to face discussion programs	• Getting disturbed due to personal conditions and circumstances.
• Use of new techniques and methodology	• Lack of interest in publication (writing for journals)
• Good professional values	• Stealing and copying other ideas
• Exposure to educational journals and magazines	• Health problem
• Self evaluation for better teaching	• Preferring much to go for evaluation in other institutes
• Regular teaching	• Referring only old edition books.

• Attending seminars/ conferences/ workshops/ guest lecture.	• Non-utilization of teaching model and new methods of teaching
• Taking guidance for future growth	• Introvert behaviour

Table 4: Shows The Strengths And Weaknesses In Teachers' Initiatives And Their Professional Development.

The opinion of the teachers regarding the opportunities and threats in teachers' initiatives and their professional development is also shown in the Table – 5.

Opportunities	Threats
• Future promotions.	• Over loaded working schedule/ time table
• Updated technological facilities	• Dishonest department workers/ officials.
• Guidance from department heads and senior teachers.	• Lack of good library and recent publications of book and ICT facilities and labs.
• Encouraging environment of institute.	• Insufficient staff
• Facility of professional training and in-service courses.	• Less financial support
• Motivation and reward by Heads and Deans.	• Non co-operatives colleagues and family constraints.
• Institutional concern	• Lack of official support

Table 5: Shows The Opportunities And Threats In Teachers' Initiatives And Their Professional Development.

7. Discussion Of The Results

Teachers are well aware of what are professional development and the initiatives they need to take to develop themselves professionally. Most of the teachers take initiatives for their professional growth but sometimes they are unable to take initiatives due to some constraints such as lack of official and financial support, overloaded working schedule/time table, dishonest department workers/officials, lack of ICT and lab facilities, lack of good and recent publications of books, insufficient staff, less provision of duty leave and less financial support. These are also the threats in their professional development for which the institutions should focus. Barret et al. Angelin (2007) and Guskey (1995) also suggested that to improve the quality of teaching and learning and professional development there is the need to provide opportunities. Similarly, internal constraints like - lack of subject knowledge, insincerity towards teaching, personal health conditions or laziness, bad habit of stealing and copying other ideas, referring old edition books, unawareness of using I.T etc. as the weakness in the personality can create hindrance in taking many initiatives in professional development for which positive attitude should be developed among the teachers. Htabard Handing(2000) and Ghana.(2001) suggested that in-service training programmes develop positive attitude and inculcate the professional values among the teachers, which are responsible to develop them professionally. On the other hand writing articles in journal, attending seminars/ conferences/ workshops/ guest lecture, taking guidance for future growth, strong technical & subject knowledge within the field, good teaching habits, participation in face to face discussion programs, use of new techniques and methodology, self evaluation, good professional values etc. as the strength of the personality are helpful for professional development. Ferguson, G. (2000) in his study has proved that the individual professional development planning can bring improvement in students' performance, deepens their knowledge and skill and develop high quality teachers. Similarly, the opportunities such as future promotions, updated technological facilities, guidance from department heads and senior teachers, good working conditions, facility of professional training and in-service courses, motivation and reward by Heads and Deans, Institutional concern are some of the incentives which encourage for the professional development. Similar ideas are given by Panda, S. (2005) and Bawane, J. (2007) in their works as the external opportunities are must in the field of professional development.

8. Conclusion

Teaching information, techniques and methods are constantly being updated and changed, but the teacher's education alone will not be enough to serve them throughout their whole career. Professional development is about lifelong learning and growing activity for which administration and management support along with agencies and associations is earnestly required in this field. They can provide various facilities which would help in enhancing the professional growth of the teachers; they should also bring awareness among teachers about their profession and their responsibilities towards students and society.

9. References

1. Barrett et al. Angeline (2007). "Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning: A review of recent literature." From <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cthe20>
2. Bawane, J. (2004). "Integrating Technology Education Development of Teachers: Developmental Experiences" from http://wikieducator.org/images/6/62/PID_799.
3. Ferguson, G. (2000). "Individual Professional Development Planning for Teachers." From <http://www.lee.k12.fl.us/dept/curr>
4. Ghana(2001). "Teacher development Professional Profile" from <http://www.glp.net/library/teacher-training/>
5. Good bae and Scates(1971). "Methodology of Educational Research", Delhi: Vikas publication house pvt.Ltd.
6. Kaul, L. (1984) "Methodology of Educational Research". Delhi: Vikas publication house pvt.Ltd.
7. Panda, S. (2005). "Teacher Staff Development Training Research" from <HTTP://www.SANTOSH PANDA.NET?TEACHINGANDRESEARCH.HTM>
8. Sarswat, M. (2005). Research Project Training and Professional Development of Teachers for Effective use of ICT in Improving Teaching and Learning", from http://www.glp.net/c/document_library/get_file?p_id=473711&folderID=128587name=DLFE-1053.
9. Webster's New International Dictionart of the English Language, Second Edition, Unibridged, W.A. Neilson, T. A. Knott, P. W. Carhart (eds), G.&C. Merriam Company, Springfield, MA, 1950