



Role of Faculty Development Programs in Improving Teaching–Learning Process in Higher Education with reference to Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

In higher education, Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) are essential for improving the caliber of instruction and learning. Faculty members must constantly update their knowledge, instructional strategies, and technical proficiency in order to satisfy the changing demands of students in the quickly expanding educational environment. FDPs are organized training programs that support teachers in developing their pedagogical skills, using cutting-edge teaching techniques, incorporating contemporary technology into the classroom, and enhancing their capacity for research. This study looks at how faculty development programs in higher education institutions can increase the efficacy of instruction and encourage student-centered learning. It emphasizes how FDPs support teachers' professional development, promote the use of digital resources, improve curriculum delivery, and increase assessment procedures. The purpose of the study is to identify the different kinds of faculty development and training programs that higher education institutions now run. The study also discovered that faculty members at higher education institutions had participated in a variety of faculty development programs, with the majority of them having attended conferences, seminars, workshops, and faculty development programs. They also presented papers at conferences, symposiums, and seminars.

Keywords:-Faculty Induction Programme , NEP, Higher Education Institutions, Training.

Introduction:

According to the National Education Policy 2020, faculty members at HEIs are seen as partners and mentors who help students develop into innovators and creative thinkers. "The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no one can rise above its teachers," the National Policy on Education 1986 highlights. In higher education, faculty development programs (FDPs) have been shown to be effective in enhancing teaching abilities. to inspire educators to advance institutional efficacy by fostering faculty

members' professional, organizational, instructional, and personal development. Faculty members across all disciplines must comprehend best instructional practices and the tactics that foster effective teaching behaviors and skills since these practices are essential to their continued employment and advancement. Even while university professors are thought to be authorities in their fields, many may not have received training in effective teaching techniques, sharing their knowledge, or improving their instruction. In higher education, faculty induction and mentorship are frequently disregarded, despite the fact that many faculty members say they find it difficult to carry out their teaching duties (Sorcinelli, 2000).

Establishing and assessing a faculty development program can help create best practices in education and improve faculty competency in addressing the demands of student learning. According to Brookes (2010), teacher support programs could be offered through a combination of online and in-person sessions. Developing faculty members' self-awareness and confidence in their ability to succeed as educators are essential components of faculty development. We intend to learn more about how development programs affect teacher capabilities and student outcomes by creating and assessing a new faculty development program. Among the significant and fascinating developments in higher education during the past few decades is the consistent growth in faculty development programs. Individuals' intellectual, professional, and social development is greatly influenced by higher education. The effectiveness of instruction has a significant impact on the caliber of higher education. Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) have become vital resources for improving teaching skills, bringing subject knowledge up to date, and using creative pedagogical approaches in this setting. Teachers need to constantly improve their abilities because of the quick changes in technology, the globalization of education, and the changing expectations of their students. Programs for faculty development assist teachers in refining their methods and making the teaching-learning process more efficient.

Programs for faculty development are organized training efforts intended to: Improve your ability to teach, refresh your understanding of the subject, Encourage the development of research skills, Describe contemporary teaching techniques, Boost the utilization of instructional technology. These programs consist of training sessions, conferences, orientation programs, refresher courses, workshops, and seminars.

Review of the Literature:

In higher education, faculty development programs (FDPs) have become a crucial tool for improving academic quality, pedagogical innovation, and teaching proficiency. Their effects on student learning outcomes, institutional growth, and the efficacy of instruction are highlighted in an expanding corpus of study at the international, national, and regional levels.

Ahmed et al. (2016) examined the connection between faculty performance as a dependent variable and training and development as an independent variable. The outcome demonstrated that training had a major effect on each faculty member's performance. According to the study, elements like a competitive wage, benefits package, and extracurricular activities tend to encourage employees to work hard, which has a significant impact on faculty performance and, ultimately, business school performance. As a result, the study suggested that businesses prioritize and invest in setting up as many training programs as possible.

Sanikommu, Suresh, and Guntupalli, Sudharani N. V. et. al.,(2017) "Perceptions on Faculty Development Among Dental Faculty in Andhra Pradesh" There is a clear need for organized procedures for faculty development, according to studies done especially in Andhra Pradesh. According to a survey of dentistry professors at schools connected to Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences: Many faculty members noted a lack of institutional support, and nearly 80% had never attended an FDP. The majority thought that FDPs might greatly raise teaching standards and educational quality. Crucially, 93% of respondents said they would be eager to take part, showing that there is a high desire for organized professional development opportunities.

Faculty competency is widely acknowledged as the foundation of high-quality higher education, according to **Gopi, A. L. (2024)**, "Assessing the Impact of Faculty Development Programs on College Teachers: A Survey-Based Analysis." According to a study on the effects of FDP in Indian universities, these programs greatly enhance faculty motivation, professional collaboration, and teaching methodologies. However, issues like time limits and a lack of institutional support still have an impact on results and participation.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To improve teaching effectiveness and student-centered teaching methods.
2. To enhance research skills among faculty and integrate technology into teaching-learning processes.
3. To develop professional competence and leadership skills and update faculty with current trends in education.

Role of FDPs in Improving Teaching

Improving Pedagogical Skills: FDPs expose educators to contemporary teaching techniques such as experiential learning, problem-based learning, active learning, and outcome-based education. These techniques increase student engagement and interaction in the classroom.

Encouraging Technology Use: FDPs teach instructors how to use digital assessment tools, learning management systems (LMS), smart classrooms, and online teaching platforms. This increases the effectiveness and accessibility of instruction.

Promoting Student-Centered Learning: Conventional instruction emphasizes the instructor. The focus of FDPs is shifted to include collaborative learning, creativity, critical thinking, and student participation. Learning results are enhanced as a result.

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Enhancing Assessment Methods: Teachers acquire contemporary assessment techniques such project-based evaluation, rubric-based grading, and continuous assessment. This guarantees thorough and equitable student evaluation.

Enhancing Research Capabilities: FDPs encourage teachers to: Apply for projects, publish papers, and carry out research. Teachers who are focused on research bring up-to-date information into the classroom.

The various types of Faculty Training and Development Programs in India are as follows:

UGC- Orientation Programme: The goal of the orientation program is to make the faculty members aware of the connections between the Indian educational system, education philosophy and pedagogy, environment education and development, and society. It offers a foundation for improving subject-matter expertise, personality development, and management. Additionally, it raises faculty members' awareness of computers and information technology. In accordance with the National Policy on Education of 1986, the University Grants Commission established Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs), which are now known as Human Resource Development Centers (HRDCs), to carry out this program. Under the career progression plans, all recently hired faculty members in HEIs are required to participate in this program for a maximum of six years of continuous service. According to UGC guidelines, a minimum of 144 contact hours must be completed during an orientation program. This results in a four-week program with 24 working days of six hours each day for the participants, making the course full-time and residential.

UGC- Refresher Course: In addition to learning from peers through knowledge exchange on a single platform, the refresher course allows in-service faculty members to stay up to date on the most recent developments and technology in their particular fields. The program is full-time and residential, lasting three weeks with a minimum of eighteen working days, 108 contact hours, and a six-hour daily commitment. To be chosen for a refresher course, one must take part in the orientation program. A faculty member may enroll in a refresher course one year after completing an orientation course and another year after taking two refresher courses.

UGC-Short Term Course: This two-day to one-week workshop offers practical instruction in the relevant field, research technique, MOOCs E-Content development, academic administrator workshop, leadership development, and socially significant subjects.

UGC- Summer School Training/ Winter School Training: It gives faculty members information on both general and subject-specific awareness. Basic science, humanities, social science, and the arts are all covered in the program. The training phase lasts for 21 days.

Faculty Induction Program: The UGC-Human Resource Development Centers (HRDCs) administer the Faculty Induction Program, a residential program that lasts one month and is divided into two periods of 18 and 12 days, respectively. All newly hired faculty members must complete the program within a year of beginning their employment. Participant-centered, inclusive, outcome-based, active learning with appropriate technology use is the main focus of the induction program. The Induction Program's pedagogy is built on a combination of expert-led, peer-facilitated, and self-learning approaches. The purpose of the induction program is to familiarize faculty members with the professional expectations and governance of higher education institutions, as well as to help them comprehend their duties and responsibilities. Exploring the pedagogical processes is another of its main objectives.

Faculty Development Programs: Through the use of modern training techniques, faculty development programs concentrate on transferring knowledge and skills related to research and teaching. Depending on the HEIs that are arranging it, FDP might last anywhere from five days to six months.

Skills Development Program: The idea behind the skill development program training is to give faculty members more possibilities and scope by fostering their talent and improving their knowledge and abilities. The goal of skill training is to give faculty members the right instruction to help and mentor them in their chosen fields. Depending on the organizational institutions, Skills Development might last anywhere from three days to a month.

Quality Improvement Programs: By providing them with higher degree programs (M. Tech, Ph.D.), short-term courses, or curriculum development activities to improve teaching and learning, quality improvement programs raise the caliber of prospective faculty members. The All India Council for Technical Education, or AICTE, typically sponsors this program to improve the knowledge and skills of in-service instructors in engineering degree-granting schools.

Workshops: Typically, HEIs or UGC-HRDCs host workshops for their faculty members to equip them with a certain skill according to the workshop's theme. It may focus on different facets of ITC tool use, teaching approach, or research methodology. Workshops give faculty members practical experience with strategies that can be applied to improve teaching-learning in the classroom and to support future research.

Seminars/ Conferences/ Symposiums: HEIs either arrange seminars, conferences, and symposiums on their own or in conjunction with other HEIs. These programs are either entirely funded by UGC and other national or international funding organizations, or they are self-sponsored by the participating HEIs. It gives faculty members a stage on which to deliver their research papers to other faculty members and students. This gives faculty members a fantastic chance to share their research and inventions and engage in knowledge and idea sharing with other faculty members. Faculty members' knowledge and abilities are significantly improved by

the experience of presenting papers or participating in research, which also gives them more insight into the topic and promotes professional growth.

Administrative training Programs: Faculty members can concentrate on leadership and management skills in school administration through short-course training programs called Administrative Training Programs. Institutions use this cross-training approach to give faculty members the skills they need to handle administrative tasks and perform additional non-teaching responsibilities. The goal of the training program is to prepare and develop faculty members and give them the necessary tools and techniques to take on a variety of administrative duties and management activities so they may succeed in their teaching careers.

Faculty Exchange Programs: Faculty members have the opportunity to teach or conduct research overseas for a semester or academic year through faculty exchange programs. With the opportunity to share ideas and see a range of styles, it offers the advantage of experience to a faculty composition that is culturally broad and varied. The exchange program's ultimate objective is to create a vibrant, varied faculty. In order to strengthen the relationships between the relevant universities, it offers a special chance for contact between foreign and Indian institutions.

Faculty Extension Programs: Community service is emphasized in faculty extension programs. The extension faculty, who are in charge of providing disciplinary expertise and educational content for cooperative extension outreach, have specialized training and experience in academic fields. Through publications, educational conferences, tours, and other educational practices, Extension programs identify community needs and work with local groups and individuals to address the issue.

Faculty Retreats: Faculty retreats minimize the problem-solving process by refocusing faculty energy and effort on a specific objective. It is a daring and successful approach to dealing with complicated problems that arise in academic departments. The retreat offers a chance to disconnect from everyday tasks, meet with coworkers, and have a discussion about values, purpose, and meaning. The retreat could last anywhere from one to three days.

Leadership Development Programs: The goal of leadership development programs is to produce academic leaders who are capable of managing and converting result-oriented academic institutions. The curriculum incorporates exercises that enhance faculty members' knowledge, skills, confidence, and productivity while encouraging better decision-making for a productive workplace. Additionally, it seeks to improve career prospects for senior positions in higher education institutions and boost faculty morale and retention. Over the course of an academic year, leadership development programs are also intended to support faculty members' ongoing development and to achieve certain institutional and leadership objectives.

Certificate Courses: A certification program is a collection of training components that organizations and institutions provide to help faculty members advance their careers. The certificate serves as proof that the faculty member has mastered a specific set of skills and knowledge within the allotted time frame.

Conclusion:

Teachers will have ongoing opportunities to learn about the newest developments in their field and to better themselves. These will be provided in a variety of formats, such as online teacher development modules and workshops at the local, state, national, and international levels. Teachers will be able to exchange ideas and best practices through the development of platforms, particularly online platforms. For their own professional growth, motivated by their own interests, each teacher will be expected to engage in at least 50 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities annually. A person cannot be fully prepared for professional service by formal training received in an institution; education is a continuous process. Because of the regular increase of information in the field of teacher education, instructors' expertise is falling behind, making continual learning essential. Higher education institutions now need to provide their teachers with top-notch professional training programs in order to compete in this dynamic world. It is evident that faculty development has solidified and developed into a respected endeavor in higher education.

Numerous FDPs have demonstrated efficacy in fostering faculty competencies and educational leadership, and professional training programs yield encouraging results in learning and teaching methods. In fact, faculty development is now a strategic lever for institutional quality and excellence as well as a crucial way to advance institutional preparedness to implement the necessary change in response to the increasingly complex demands that universities and colleges face. Programs for faculty development have a profound impact on raising the standard of higher education. They equip educators with up-to-date information, creative instructional techniques, and contemporary skills. The teaching-learning process consequently becomes more effective, dynamic, and student-centered. Enhancing educational standards and preparing students for future problems require investing in teacher development, which is not only a choice.

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