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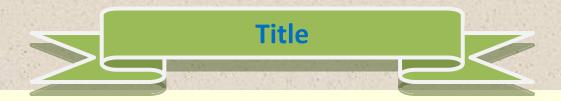
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NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH



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Abstract:

The importance of the quality of teachers cannot be overemphasized because the strength and success of an educational system depends on them whether they teach in schools, colleges or universities. The quality of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens and in turn the qualities of the citizens depend on the quality of their education. The quality of their education reflects, more than any other single factor, the quality of their teachers. A teacher's personal qualities educational qualifications, his professional training, his managerial skills and the place he occupies in the college and in the community contribute to the quality of his teaching. The education of a teacher is not complete on receiving a degree or diploma from a college or university. Pre-service education or joining a college or university is only the first stage in the continuous growth of a teacher in his profession. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, "A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself". A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continuous to burn its own flame".

The education of a teacher is never complete. The teacher is prepared for his profession before he enters it, but he must also be prepared again and again to keep abreast with latest developments. To satisfy this need is the purpose of in-service / continuing education. Every teacher, whether he is a beginner or a veteran, needs to be aware of the rapid cultural and social charges, advancements in educational theories, methodologies and practices, increase in student enrolment and range in the interests and abilities of students and the ramification of the role of education due to changes and advancements in science and technology. The frontiers of human knowledge in various fields expand rapidly. There is, therefore, a need for continued study and growth that would raise the competence of the teacher on the job and in turn, increase the standard of the whole educational system.

The term in-service education or continuing education in a broad sense includes all experiences and activities provided for teachers and designed to promote personnel and professional growth while in service. The process of continuing education is on both professional and personnel growth of teachers. The continuing education also has the connotation of the life-long education; of educating oneself throughout life, whether he is a student, teacher or a non-professional.



The programme of action of National policy on Education (1986) has indicated that the needs for education of teachers arise from several sources such as changing national goals, revision of curricula of schools and colleges, additional inputs in the teaching-learning system, in adequate background of teachers, etc. In planning and organizing continuing education for teachers, care should be taken to see that some of the sources mentioned and the corresponding needs that arise from these sources are reflected in the in-service programmes.

PROGRAMMES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH:

In planning the programmes for the professional growth of college and university teachers, specific objectives of the programme should be borne in mind for effective organization. Some of the major objectives of the programmes are:

- (i) To enable the new college teacher to understand the needs, interests and behaviour patterns of students who are in their late adolescence period.
- (ii) To develop teaching skills that would help the teacher to improve his teaching effectiveness, in addition to employing several teaching techniques to cater to the needs of students in large, medium and small groups.
- (iii) To help teacher improve his ability to communicate effectively in the classroom through the use of educational technology devices and to ensure better student participation in the teaching learning situation.
- (iv) To enable the teacher to provide guidance to students in their learning problems such as library reading and reference work, self-study and preparing for examination, and in developing the all-round personality of the students.
- (v) To understand the problems that arise in management of the students in the classes and work out strategies to solve them.
- (vi) To give special assistance to those students who are not up to the mask in their studies by diagnosing the causes for the drawbacks and providing remedial teaching as per their needs.

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(vii) To introduce the new teacher to the techniques of action research and small-scale experimentation so that he can handle effectively the particular problems that may arise in his own classes and follow procedures to manger these by his own efforts so that he can find the effectiveness of his own teaching techniques.

The in-service education programme can take up several forms and patterns depending on the purpose of which it is conducted, the resources and infrastructure available and the duration of the course. Some of the more common types are:

- (A) <u>CONTENT COURSE</u>: Content courses are conducted to upgrade the teachers in their specialization, in terms of knowledge of the latest developments, current issues and trends, their application and their relevance to college teaching. These courses are organized with the help of competent resource persons in a particular area of discipline, as the competency of the resource persons to a great extent, contributes to the success of the programme. These courses are organized for a longer duration of 4-6 weeks and this gives time to really abreast the teachers in subject content.
- (B) <u>REFRESHER COURSE:</u> Refresher courses are generally organized to give an opportunity to teachers to refresh and improve their knowledge of the subjects they teach and wider their experience in the methodology of teaching. These courses enable the teacher to keep abreast of progress in educational theories and practices. These courses are generally having 2-3 week duration.
- (C) <u>SUMMER INSTITUTES:</u> Summer Institutes can be on one specific topic or area, covering in variably all aspects of teaching learning process such as content, methodology, educational technology, evaluation including practical aspects of laboratory work, field tips and experimentation. These institutes sponsored by UGC for 2-4 weeks are the most popular programmes at the collegiate level as these institutions receive financial support from the UGC. These are other agencies such as ISTE, ICMR, ICSSR, etc., that also provide financial assistance to conduct summer institutes.
- (D) WORK SHOPS AND SEMINARS: The major concern of the workshops in to provide opportunities that are to be challenged by one's peers. The essential features of the



workshop are the intensive consideration of practical problems of classroom teaching, informal working conditions, sharing of experiences with the peer group and the availability of a range of resources such as resource persons, books, journals, learning aids and equipment and apparatus for laboratory work. The core of the workshop is in the area of group thinking and joint planning. Further, a workshop does not evaluate its members. The participants evaluate the workshop and themselves. Evaluation is a cooperative process. The goal of the workshop is the professional growth of the participants as well as the development of the programme.

(E) Some of the other modes of organizing and conducting continuing education programmes are study circles, Faculty councils, correspondence courses, etc.

CONCLUSION:

Continuing education in the form of in-service education has now become an integral part of collegiate and university education. The programme of orientation courses, refresher courses and summer institutions focuses on the development of the individual teacher and his academic and professional growth that pave the ground for effective teaching resulting in efficient learning.

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