



Effectiveness of In-Service Training Programme in Classroom Practices: A Case Study of an Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on the findings out of a case study conducted to make in-depth study to determine the impact of training programme in terms of changes in the classroom practices of teachers and to study the perception of elementary school teachers about usefulness of in-service training programme in terms of teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation. The study was a case study and delimited to one elementary school situated in Puri district. The key informants were the teachers and students of the school. The dimensions of the study covered as teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation. The school was selected through purposive sampling technique. All the entire teachers of that school were the informants of the study. Students of Class VI and VII in groups of 8 to 10 were selected as the student participants in FGD. Incidental sampling technique was followed in selection of these key informants. Tools such as: interview schedule for the teachers, classroom observation schedule and guidelines for focus group discussion were used for data collection. The results revealed a significant positive effect of in-service training on the teacher and in students' participation, conduct group work in the classroom during lesson. Teachers follow continuous and comprehensive evaluation practices such as unit test, monthly test, half yearly test and annual test. As per the pupils the teachers do not administer the weekly and surprise test in the class. The teachers ask questions only after the completion of the lesson.

Keywords: Classroom Practices, Elementary School, In-Service Training, Case Study

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In recent years, initiatives have been taken by the Government of India for achieving Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) through introducing various intervening programmes such as: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid-Day-Meal, amendment of the constitution for making elementary education a fundamental right, introduction of RTE Act 2009, subsequent formulation and implementation of regulation for implementation of RTE Act by states, and many other programmes. National Curriculum Framework-2005 was designed by NCERT for a common curriculum across the country. Both the Framework and Act specifically emphasized that teacher should take care of children and also to realize their needs and diversity within their social, cultural and political contexts. As the elementary education is the most crucial stage of education, the first eight years of schooling lays the entire foundation for personality, attitudes, social confidence, habits, arousing interest for learning and communicating with the pupils in all stages of learning. Here, the teachers' role is most important in engaging and boosting the learners to participate actively in classroom and discuss the problems of the pupils and making the classroom inclusive one. A culturally relevant pedagogy is essential to practice for each teacher. The teaching is not confined to transaction of curricular subjects, rather curricular activities are most important for the learners. Teachers should not only focus on transacting the curriculum for the examination purpose, rather should ensure the progress of the children from every aspect. The formation of a bright future depends on the early stages of education. So, the teachers should be provided in-service training to upgrade their knowledge to acquaint with the recent developments. In-service training programme is highly pertinent for the enhancement of the teacher's capacity building during their professional period for improving the standards of the students.

In-service training programmes are organized from time to time by the School and Mass Education Department, Government of Odisha, through a decentralized structure and The State Project Office at the top and Cluster Resource Centres at the bottom in the organizational structure makes the system outcome based. Among different programmes for in-service training for elementary school teachers, 'Samarthya' was a state-level integrated in-service training package in pedagogical concepts, content, theme, hard spots and district specific need based topics for in-service teachers, newly recruited teachers, under qualified teachers, head teachers, teachers working at CRC and BRC levels. All newly recruited trained teachers of elementary school level got 30 days training in a phased manner (15 days training+10 days practice+5 days consolidation); un-trained teachers got 60 days training in a year through Distance Education program run by SCERT; content based and theme based training included two subjects (5 days each), training on RTE (03 days), NCF (03 Days) and CCE (04 days). So the investigator was interested to conduct a study about impact of such in-service training programme on the elementary school teachers of Odisha.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The investigator reviewed the studies conducted in the areas in-depth knowledge about the present study. Jahangir et al. (2012) conducted a study on In-service training: A contributing factor influencing teachers' performance. The study was carried out to examine effect of Higher Education Commission's sponsored in-service teacher training on the trainee's concept about good teachers. Pre and Post test design was used. An open-ended questionnaire regarding qualities of a good teacher was administered before and after completion of the said training programme. These results can serve as a reference for reform of the teachers, teaching at the post-graduate and university level. Naoreen *et al.* (2011) conducted a study on impact of in-service teacher training on students' learning achievement in mathematics; and the study was with the objectives that to compare the learning achievements of students in the subject of mathematics taught by male and female trained and untrained teachers It was concluded that trained male and female teachers are significantly better than untrained male and female teachers, rural schools are significantly better than urban schools. Yadav (2000) conducted a study about impact of primary school teachers' in-service education on classroom transaction, and as part of review of related literature of that inquiry. It revealed the lack of academic support and incentives to teachers, inadequate facility for training, use of inappropriate approaches to the transaction of curriculum, etc., affected the efficiency and effectiveness of in-service training programmes which in turn affected the performance of teachers in their schools. Chauhan, Sharma & Rawat (2009) conducted a study on In- Service Teacher Training Programme under SSA in Sunni Educational Block of District Shimla: An Evaluative Study. It was revealed from the study: that the training component has been judged useful for teachers to a large extent in the areas of: use of Teaching Learning Material (TLM) in classroom situation, activity based teaching and child centered approach followed by subject enrichment. The Resource Persons stressed mainly on lecture-cum-discussion approach while communicating with the trainees instead of demonstration techniques, which were rarely used during the training programmes. Bezzina and Camilleri (2001) analyzed the status of professional development of in-service teachers. Classroom-based and school-based researches are to be promoted among in-service teachers. The study reported that the in-service teachers are in need of training on inclusive education and gender equality in classrooms but they get a very few opportunities for that. In-service training had a positive impact on classroom transaction in terms of use of teaching skills, subject teaching, use of TLMs, development in teacher behaviors, curricular activities etc. in , Bihar, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal but no changes were marked in Meghalaya, Nagaland and Haryana (Yadav, 2012).

After reviewing the above literatures, it is concluded that the quality of the teacher depends upon the training which they received for their up gradation of knowledge. Thus in-service training programme is highly relevant for their enhancement within their professional

period according to the felt needs and demands of the students with a view to improve their standards. The teacher is mostly responsible for the learners' achievement in the elementary school stage in order to make their level up to the mark. Most of the research studies reveals that there seems to be less impact of in-service training programme acquired by the teachers upon the students achievement because the teacher are inefficient in using the teaching skills, TLM, methods of transaction and in the evaluation procedure. Hence, the investigator is keenly interested to conduct a case study on the impact of in-service training programme on the elementary school teachers of Odisha. The study was conducted to seek the answers to the research questions formulated as follows:

1. Whether there are any changes in the classroom practices as a result of in- service training received by the elementary school teachers pertaining to teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil-teacher interaction, interaction among peers, and assessment practices?
2. How do the elementary school teachers perceive about the effectiveness of in- service training in terms of the dimensions such as, teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers, students' learning assessment?
3. What do the elementary school children perceive about the changes in teachers' behaviour in terms of teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers, students' assessment?

Objectives of the Study

1. To make in-depth study to determine the impact of training programme in terms of changes in the classroom practices of teachers.
2. To study the perception of elementary school teachers about usefulness of in-service training programme in terms of teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation.
3. To study the changes in teachers' behaviour and methods of transaction in terms of teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation.

Methodology of the Study

The study was a case study and delimited to one elementary school situated in Puri district. The key informants were the teachers and students of the school. The dimensions of the study covered as teaching skills, methods of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation.

The Case

One elementary school of Puri district of Odisha was selected as the unit of the study i.e. the case. The school was selected through purposive sampling technique. All the entire teachers of that school were the informants of the study. Students of Class VI and VII in groups of 8 to 10 were selected as the student participants in FGD. Incidental sampling technique was followed in selection of these key informants

Tools and Techniques

- (i) Interview Schedule for the Teachers
- (ii) Classroom Observation Schedule.
- (iii) Guidelines for Focus Group Discussion.

Techniques of Data Analysis

As the study was a case study and the data collected with the help of above mentioned tools were analyzed qualitatively through thick description.

RESULTS

The Profile of the Case under Study

The Case was an elementary school situated in Puri district (the name of the school has been kept confidential). The school was situated within one kilometer distance from the residence of the students.

Observation from Classroom Practices

- (i) The results revealed that trained teachers, as against their untrained counterparts, provided desired answers with proper clarification on the topic issued by the students in the classroom. It indicates a significant positive effect of in-service training on the teachers. It was also found that trained teachers postpone postpones the answers of a difficult question for the next day if required. In-service training has a significant positive effect in favour of trained teachers in case of students participation for seeking more elaboration on the lesson taught.
- (ii) As observed the trained teachers praise the students' participation in the discussion which depicts a significant effect of in-service training as compared to untrained teachers.
- (iii) As observed the trained teachers treated the students more respectfully than untrained teachers. Trained teachers were found to be friendlier than untrained teachers.

- (iv) The trained teachers, as against their untrained counterparts, conduct group work in the classroom during lesson. It depicts a significant positive effect of in-service on teachers in organizing various activities in the classroom. They allow the students to share their experiences.
- (v) Trained teachers ask more oral questions to the students for evaluating in classroom teaching-learning. Percentage of trained teachers found to be more in giving home assignments, than that of untrained counterparts, but both teachers accept feedback from students.

Perception of Students in terms of outcomes of FGD

The outcomes of Focus group discussion are presented below pertaining to the dimensions such as teaching skills, method of transaction, use of TLM, pupil teacher interaction, interaction among peers and students evaluation.

- (i) As revealed from the FGD, that the teachers introduce the lesson by telling a story, asking questions related to their topic, by showing pictures and models. Sometimes the teachers only wrote the name of the topic on the blackboard at the time of introducing the lesson.
- (ii) As revealed from the FGD, the teachers' gestures and postures are appreciated while delivering the lesson in order to draw the attention of the students. The students revealed that their teachers sometimes become irritated when they are inattentive in the class. They said that the teachers take pause at the time of deliberation of the topic.
- (iii) The students reported that their teachers used to ask questions related with the topic, general knowledge of the students. The teachers clarify their doubts regarding their other subject matter. The teacher ask multiple choice types of questions and problem related questions to the students and asked questions about the prior knowledge of the students.
- (iv) Most of the pupils said that their teachers provide hints to answer the question to the pupils when they are unable to solve the problem.
- (v) Most of the students that teachers provide feedback on answering questions such as good, very well and give fruitful suggestions to the pupils and clarify the doubts frequently.
- (vi) The teachers teach the lesson in the classroom through asking questions related to the previous knowledge of the pupils about the topic, using lecture method.
- (vii) The teachers do not organize any peer learning classes for the students. The teachers motivate the students for self study. The teachers do not conduct any project work for the students.

- (viii) Most of the students agreed that the teachers do not use appropriate teaching aids due to the lack of adequate teaching learning aids available in the class.
- (ix) Only conventional teaching aids such as showing diagrams, pictures of great personalities, monuments are shown by the teachers while teaching. The teacher do not use audio-visual aids, such as, computer, television broadcasting educational programme, radio, etc. in the class.
- (x) Most of the students of the case said that the teachers cooperate with them in solving the doubts of the learners in the remedial classes by helping them and by practicing the activities of the topic.
- (xi) Most of the students said yes that the teachers help them to solve the problems that aroused in their topic and by revising activities of the topic. The teachers also ask the students to find out the solution among them and if they failed to answer it, then the teachers will help them to solve it.
- (xii) The students reported that they actively participate in the class at the time of asking questions to the teachers, participating in the essay, debate competition. But those the shy students, feel nervous to ask questions or clear their doubts.
- (xiii) Teachers follow assessment practices such as unit test, monthly test, half yearly test and annual test. As per the pupils the teachers do not administer the weekly and surprise test in the class. The teachers ask questions only after the completion of the lesson.

Perception of Teachers Vis-à-vis Observation in Classroom and Opinion of Students

- (i) As revealed, some teachers have undergone in-service trainings and some do not. As reported by the teachers, they introduced the lesson by telling a story, asking questions related to the previous knowledge of the pupils and showing pictures, diagrams and models.
- (ii) Students also reported the similar responses, that teachers introduced the lesson by telling a story, asking questions related to their topic, by showing pictures and models.
- (iii) The same was also observed by the investigator. Hence, the teacher began the lesson with the help of storytelling, testing the previous knowledge of the pupils and showing pictures.
- (iv) Majority of the teachers mentioned that they explained the topic with the help of showing different pictures, models, and diagrams to the learners and cited appropriate example and used dictionary.
- (v) Students also reported the similar responses, that teachers used to cite examples in order to explain the topic and but do not show any pictures, models, and diagrams to

them. The same was also observed by the observed by the investigator. In conclusion, the teacher did not show any kind of pictures, models and diagrams to the pupils.

- (vi) Majority of the teachers take pause at short intervals, interact with students and also modify their voice while teaching in the class. The same was also observed by the investigator. Hence, the teacher did not move in the class, they also scold the pupils and beat them when they became inattentive in the class. They did not modifying their speech pattern.
- (vii) The majority of the teacher expressed that they transact the lesson through discussion and demonstration, play way method, activity based method and they also conduct practical work. The students they replied that the teachers only follow lecture method in the class. The teachers do not organize any peer learning classes for the students and also did not conduct project work for the students.
- (viii) The teachers mentioned during interview that they cooperate to the students in clarifying their doubts and diagnose the problem aroused in the subject. While discussing with the students they replied that the teachers cooperate with them in solving the doubts of the learners in the remedial classes by supplying notes to the students and by practicing the activities of the topic. The same was also observed by the investigator. Hence, the teacher provided cooperation among the students by supplying note to the students and clarifying their doubts.
- (ix) The teachers practice continuous and comprehensive evaluation to test the pupils' achievement in the curricular subjects as well as curricular activities and giving home assignments, class work and oral and written test to the pupils. The students also agreed that the teachers evaluated the teaching learning process continuously through unit test, monthly test, half yearly test and annual test. They said that the teacher did not administer the weekly and surprise test in the class. The same was also observed by the investigator. Hence the teacher administered unit test, monthly test, half yearly test and annual test in order to assess the students' progress. They also gave home work, class work and oral test. The teachers also assess the student after the completion of the topic by asking questions.

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