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WWW.BLENDEDLEARNING@TEACHERS' TRAINING.COM: THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ashvin L. Nisarta

ABSTRACT

Teacher training is one of higher training programme in terms of all other faculties which are affiliated with education. The innovations and action is now taking more appropriate in this filed, many of the government resolutions have also been changed in favor of education process. We all know that the teacher proficiency have more updated on this age. For serving this smart age in the classroom. Here in this paper the researcher have try to find some extra-ordinary suggestions which is carried out by this small research. Researcher has developed one questionnaire for data collection from the teachers they are working in Navsari district.

KEYWORDS :*Blended learning, professioinal development of teachers,*

Short Profile

Ashvin L. Nisarta is working as an Assistant professor at Department of Education in M K Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar(Gujarat).

INTRODUCTION

Professional development, in broad sense, refers to the development of a person in his or her personal role (Eleonora: 2003). Surely, professional development enhances competence of all members in a learning community to pursuit their life-long learning. In educational setting, reflecting itself as an important trend in the growth and improvement of any educational institution, teacher professional development becomes a milestone in teachers' continuum of life-long learning and career progression.

Statement of the problem:

www.blendedlearning@teachers'training.com: The Need for Professional Development

What is professional development?

Many scholars have attempted to define teacher professional development in terms of a high-quality, meaningful and effective teacher enhancement. According to Bolam (1993) teacher professional development refers to "any professional development activities engaged in by teachers which enhance their knowledge and skills and enable them to consider their attitudes and approaches to the education of children, with a view to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process." From the view of teachers' commitment, Glatthorn (1995) asserts that teacher professional development is what a teacher attains as a result of obtaining experience and exploring his or her teaching systematically. Looking at external factors, Horsley (1996) defines teacher professional development as "opportunities offered to educators to develop knowledge, skills, approaches and dispositions to improve their effectiveness in their classrooms and organizations."

Although definitions and concepts of teacher professional development may be somewhat different as scholars might approach it from different perspectives, they all share a

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common view that teacher professional development can be brought to teachers as opportunities to upgrade or apply their knowledge or it can be what teachers need and try to obtain or explore by their experience. In other words, the term "teacher professional development" goes beyond the meaning of "staff development" or "in-service training"; it includes both formal and informal means of helping teachers master new skills, widen their knowledge, develop an innovative insight into their pedagogy, their practice and their understanding of their own needs since a teacher's professional development is an aspect of his or her personal development as a whole.

What is Blended Learning?

Blended learning combines online instruction components with those found in traditional face-to face instructional environments. Blended learning environment allow students to take part in both synchronous learning, overcoming barriers of communication, time and distance. Such a blend of e learning and class based learning combines the any time /place/ place advantages of online facilities and materials, often through a mix of media, with opportunities for teacher support.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

-To know the opinion of primary teachers regarding traditional teaching.
-To know the use of traditional methods in the teaching of primary teachers.
-To know the opinion of primary teachers regarding e-learning.
-To know the availability of e resources for primary teachers.
-To know the efficiency of primary teachers to use of e -resources.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY:

There are total 853 primary schools in Navsari District. Out of them 744 are District Panchayat Schools, 22 are Ashram Shalas, and 7 are Grant in Aid schools and 80 are Non Grant in Aid Schools. Total 4295 teachers from primary schools of Navsari District are become the population of this study.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

Data were collected from Navsari district of Gujarat state. A sample of 208 teachers was selected from District Panchayat School, Ashram Shala, and Grant in Aid school and Non Grant in Aid School of Navsari District of Gujarat state.

DATA COLLECTION:

The investigator personally visited all the selected teachers. After obtaining due permission opinionnair were given to them.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

Investigator collected the data from different cluster group of primary school and it was found that 538 schools have computer lab with micro phones, speakers and computers facility. 487 schools have LCD Projector and 33 schools have extra LCD Projector which they can use in different class. But unfortunately not a single school has internet facility. T.V. set and Dish are available for most of all schools.

In the second stage, investigator selected 208 teachers as a sample that was came to take training in a workshop. Investigator gave them an opinionnair. Their response is given below.

ABOUT LCD PROJECTOR:

189 out of 208 teachers say that they have computer lab facility. 157 teachers have LCD Projector and they all know how to operate LCD Projector in their classroom but out of them 134 teachers used LCD in their classroom and only 68 teachers use LCD in their class regularly.

ABOUT T.V. SET AND DISH:

All teachers agreed that they have T.V. set and Dish facility in their school, But out of

them only 96 teachers use the facility regularly.

About Computer:

All teachers show that they know how to operate computer and their different use like, Power Point, Word, Excel etc. They use the equipments in their classroom and not only that but some of their students also make Power Point Presentation.

About Internet:

There were only 21 teachers who use internet to get information regarding their subject of teaching. They get information from different workshop and seminar only. 84 Teachers believed that computer and other media are effective but traditional learning has its own value. Combination of both approaches can be more effective instead of one.

SUGGESTIONS:

On the basis of the opinion some suggestions can be given as under

It can be seen that complete dependence on e – learning or traditional learning comes with a set of advantages and disadvantages. While e-learning is still finding its way in our education system, a complete dependence on e learning can land us in difficulty as we are still not fully geared to use e learning in terms of infrastructure, finance and manpower. Word over, it has been accepted that e learning can at the most supplement the traditional way of teaching, which obviously implies that we can do not away with teacher. The need of the hour is a right mix of traditional approach with the latest concept of e learning. Hence, what is required is a blend of both- the e learning as well as the traditional learning.

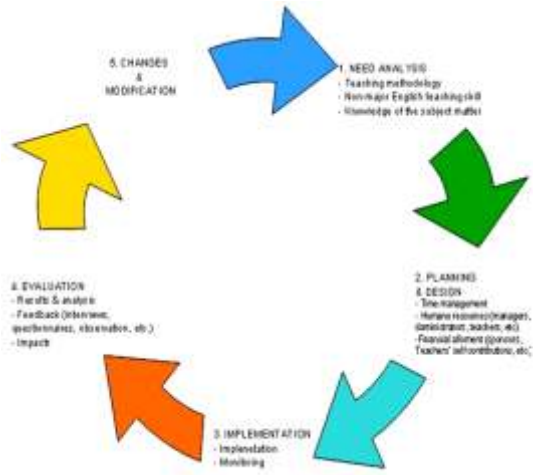

Figure1: A proposed professional development program for teachers

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of other potential positive consequences of Blended Learning professional development being used to support educational change in schools. This applies not only to technology integration but to other changes as well. For example:

• Teachers taking Blended Learning professional development are acting as role models to their students as life long learners. This will benefit the climate and culture of the school and contribute to it becoming a learning organization.

• Teachers who take high quality Blended Learning courses and professional development will become cognizant of what comprises a quality online learning experience and may be able to utilize this in teaching online courses of their own.

• Teacher isolation may be minimized and teacher turnover in small rural schools may be reduced if teachers can network and learn from other teachers without traveling great distances. This may have a stabilizing impact on rural schools and enable them to embrace change in a more meaningful and effective way

• Blended Learning professional development can help facilitate change not only in teachers

but also administrators, educational assistants, clerical staff, central office staff, board members etc. This medium has the potential of making schools true learning organizations and may be the catalyst that sparks a community of learners and brings education to the forefront in the community.

• As successful Blended Learning professional development becomes more widely used, communities may begin to embrace online courses and distance learning as a viable alternative; especially in rural areas where teachers shortages and a lack of teachers for specialized areas means possible school closures or severely curtailed programs.

SUMMING UP:

Teacher professional development is a life-long and continuous process in which teachers are expected to upgrade their knowledge, master new skills and change their practices since advancement in their teaching career is finally for their students and education reform. Besides, teachers and their professional development must be seen as an investment so it is necessary that schools not only apply appropriate teacher professional development and human resource development policies but also ensure the means of their executions through efficient management and leadership.

Obviously, only skillful and knowledgeable teachers can form a foundation of good schools with high quality students. Therefore, enhancing teachers' teaching career is considered the most important and strategic investments of time, money and efforts that human resource managers make in education. These investments must be well prepared and conducted since teacher professional development acts as a key indicator in education human resource management and development. Most of all, investments on teacher advancement ultimately result in improving achievement of all students.

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