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Enhancing Academic Growth: Exploring The Professional Development Needs Of Indian University Teachers

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Abstract : This research investigates the ongoing professional development (CPD) requirements of university educators in India by examining the current deficiencies in training for professionals and faculty enhancement initiatives. As colleges and universities aim to improve instructional quality and respond to changing educational needs, it is essential to evaluate the present condition of faculty development and pinpoint significant areas that need enhancement. This study seeks to offer a thorough insight into the obstacles encountered by university educators in their professional development and capacity enhancement. A survey-based approach was used, focusing on faculty from public universities throughout India to collect information about their CPD experiences, difficulties, and expectations. The results indicate a considerable demand for organized and cohesive CPD programs, especially in fields like information and communication technology (ICT) training, contemporary classroom management methods, creative teaching strategies, and availability of current instructional resources. Numerous faculty members voice worries regarding inadequate institutional support, insufficient training options, and restricted access to new educational technologies. The research highlights the importance of policy actions to enhance faculty development programs, guaranteeing that educators possess the necessary skills and knowledge to address current educational challenges. Suggestions are offered to policymakers and university leaders to create impactful CPD programs that improve teaching effectiveness, support professional development, and ultimately boost student learning outcomes in Indian higher education institutions.

Keywords **- Continuous Professional Development, University Teachers, Higher Education, Teacher Training, Pedagogy, ICT Integration**

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in India is crucial for national progress as it trains skilled professionals and intellectual leaders. Nonetheless, the success of university education is significantly reliant on the caliber and ongoing development of its faculty members. Educators must possess professional qualifications and training to perform their roles efficiently **(Dilshad et al., 2019)**. Technology is nothing but the study of techniques **(Kanvaria, 2018a)**. It means the study of such techniques, which makes any task easier, efficient, less time consuming, more accurate, and with lesser efforts **(Kanvaria, 2018b)**. Following swift technological developments and evolving teaching methods, university educators require continuous training to stay

effective. This research seeks to evaluate the existing CPD programs in India, pinpoint shortcomings, and suggest methods for enhancement.

As stated by **Melanie Allen (2009),** CPD is the method of assessing and documenting the skills, knowledge, and experience that teachers acquire during their careers alongside any prior formal or informal education. It serves as a record of the knowledge people acquire, utilize, and come across. The aim of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is to guarantee that university educators continually improve their skills, understanding, and professional competencies to address the changing needs of education. CPD aims to enhance teaching effectiveness by providing educators with contemporary pedagogical strategies and ensuring they remain informed about the latest developments in their specific domains and educational technologies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a well-established approach in higher education aimed at enhancing teaching effectiveness and adapting to evolving educational demands. Research indicates that structured CPD programs improve faculty performance, student engagement, and institutional effectiveness **(Guskey, 2002).** However, in India, CPD remains inconsistent, with limited formalized training opportunities available for university faculty **(Bhattacharya & Sharma, 2019).**

A review of global CPD models suggests that developed nations emphasize pedagogical innovations, digital literacy, and evidence-based teaching practices **(Desimone, 2009).** In contrast, Indian universities primarily focus on traditional lecture-based methodologies, often lacking emphasis on student-centered learning **(Sahu, 2020).** Studies highlight that Indian university teachers require structured CPD programs to develop competencies in curriculum design, formative assessments, and technological integration **(Mishra, 2017).**

Despite initiatives by agencies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, faculty development programs are fragmented, leading to gaps in professional competency. The absence of regular CPD assessments further exacerbates this issue, resulting in inconsistent faculty preparedness across institutions **(Kumar & Singh, 2021).** This study aims to contribute to existing literature by assessing CPD needs in Indian universities and proposing a comprehensive framework for faculty development.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of university teachers in India has evolved significantly, especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study by **Lakshmi et al. (2022)** compares pre-pandemic and pandemic-era CPD needs in open and distance learning (ODL) institutions, highlighting shifts in training preferences and competencies required for digital teaching **(Lakshmi et al., 2022).** Similarly, **Asgar and Ratra (2020)** examined how universities leveraged ICT tools for CPD during lockdowns, emphasizing virtual faculty development programs and online workshops, though challenges such as accessibility and engagement were noted **(Asgar & Ratra, 2020).**

Additionally, a broader comparative analysis by **Singh et al. (2020)** places India's CPD within the South Asian context, recognizing historical influences of colonial educational models, centralization, and bureaucratic constraints on CPD effectiveness **(Singh et al., 2020).** The global comparative study by **Latchanna et al. (2021)** contrasts India's CPD structure with that of Finland and Singapore, underscoring India's struggles in attracting competent candidates for initial teacher education and the need for systemic reforms **(Latchanna et al., 2021).** Lastly, **Subitha (2019)** identifies structural barriers such as centralized governance, socio-cultural influences, and the lack of career progression pathways as impediments to effective CPD in India **(Subitha, 2019).** Overall, while India has made strides in CPD through digital tools and policy interventions, significant gaps remain in implementation, scalability, and inclusivity.

Research Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the current state of faculty training programs in Indian public universities.
2. To identify the key challenges faced by university teachers in accessing and utilizing CPD opportunities.
3. To explore faculty perceptions and expectations regarding professional development initiatives in higher education.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

***3.1 Research Design*:** A descriptive research design was utilized to carry out this study. The survey method was utilized to gather data for the study, as it is the most suitable and convenient approach for this research

3.2 Sample of the Study: 150 faculty members (teaching staff) which consisted of both male and female, were selected as the sample of the study from five major public universities of India. A stratified sampling technique was adopted to select the study sample.

***3.3 Tool and Tool Development*:** A survey was developed to assess the need for ongoing professional development for educators employed in Indian Universities. Following an extensive review of the pertinent literature and expert advice, the questionnaire was developed. The survey consists of 35 items rated on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire included strategies for lesson planning, teaching methods, ICT implementation, classroom management techniques, and psychological considerations.

***3.4 Data Collection and Analysis*:** The data were collected from university teachers upon their consent for participation in the study. Clear instructions were provided prior to data collection. The respondents were ensured regarding the confidentiality and anonymity of the data. Frequency and percentage were employed as statistical measures for data analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Presentation of the findings

Table 1: *Lesson Planning Strategies*

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I create a realistic timeline	F	3	3	3	138	3
	%	2	2	2	92	2
I am proficient in using teaching aids.	F	3	6	6	66	69
	%	2	4	4	44	46
In lesson planning, I outline the learning objectives.	F	51	75	9	12	3
	%	34	50	6	8	2

Table No.1 indicates that Ninety-two percent teachers disagreed with the fact that they established a realistic timeframe while two percent strongly disagreed, two percent agreed and two percent strongly agreed. Four percent agreed and two percent strongly agreed that they are competent to use instructional resources, while 46 percent strongly disagreed and 44 percent disagreed. But 2% of the teachers strongly disagreed and 8% disagreed that they had explicitly mentioned the learning objectives in lesson planning, while 50% agreed and 34% strongly agreed.

Table 2: *Teaching*

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I provide students with the opportunity to learn and practice metacognitive techniques.	F	0	3	3	102	42
	%	0	2	2	68	28
I can address higher-as-well as lower–level cognitive objectives.	F	3	3	3	78	63
	%	2	2	2	52	42
I monitor students and provide regular appropriate feedback.	F	3	3	3	99	42
	%	2	2	2	66	28
I know curriculum content and can use strategies for teaching it.	F	57	72	6	9	6
	%	38	48	4	6	4

Based on Table No. 2, two percent of the teachers agreed with the assertion that they instruct the students metacognitive skills and provide them with the chance to master them; 68% disagreed and 28% strongly disagreed. The table indicates that 52% of the teachers disagreed that they are able to rise to both higher and lower-level cognitive goals, and 42% strongly disagreed with that. The table reflects that sixty-six percent disagreed and twenty-eight percent disagreed strongly with the statement that teachers frequently observe the student and provide relevant comments. From the above table, forty-eight percent agreed, and thirty-eight percent strongly agreed with the statement that "I know the curriculum and can utilize teaching strategies for it", 6% disagreed and 4% disagreed strongly.

Table 3: *Use of ICT at the University level*

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am familiar with modern, efficient ICT tools and equipment	F	3	3	3	105	36
	%	2	2	2	70	24
Universities provide well-designed websites or even classrooms that are furnished with computers, projectors, and other essential instruments.	F	0	3	3	123	12
	%	0	2	2	82	8
I know how to use computer programs that support educational activities.	F	45	69	9	18	9
	%	30	46	6	12	6

Table No. 3 indicated that seventy percent disagreed that they were well familiar with the use of innovative and effective ICT equipment and tools while twenty-four percent strongly disagreed. Eighty-two percent replied disagreeing, 8% strongly disagreeing, that well-designed websites or classrooms equipped with the required technology like PCs and video projectors are accessible. Forty-six percent of the teachers concurred and thirty percent strongly concurred that they are aware of the computer programs that can enhance teaching and learning activities, while six percent strongly disagreed and other twelve percent disagreed with the assertion.

Table 4: *Classroom Management Techniques*

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am aware of effective classroom management strategies.	F	0	3	3	135	9
	%	0	2	2	90	6
In order to make the classroom atmosphere better, I change the way students behave.	F	0	3	3	138	6
	%	0	2	2	92	4
During class, I formally control my time.	F	57	63	6	15	9
	%	38	42	4	10	6

Table 4 reveals that only 2% of teachers agreed with the statement 'I am knowledgeable with classroom management strategies', while 90% disagreed with it. Ninety-two percent of the teachers disagreed with the statement "they changed student behavior to improve classroom environment," while only two percent agreed with it. Furthermore, 38% strongly agreed and 42% agreed that teachers had formal control over class time, while 6% strongly disagreed and 10% disagreed with this assertion.

Table 5: *Psychological Factors*

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I understand how students think and learn.	F	3	3	3	132	9
	%	2	2	2	88	6
I am able to employ learning methodologies and motivating techniques for my students.	F	0	3	3	138	6
	%	0	2	2	92	4
I am aware of the social environment, interpersonal connections, and elements affecting	F	0	0	3	141	6

students' emotional health.						
	%	0	0	2	94	4
I motivate students to participate in class activities.	F	60	60	9	12	9
	%	40	40	6	8	6

Table No.5 shows that 88% of teachers disagree, with 6% strongly disagreeing, that they comprehend their students' thinking and learning processes. 94% of teachers disagreed that they could effectively utilize motivating strategies to assist children learn, with 4% strongly disagreeing. Furthermore, 94% of teachers disagreed, with 4% strongly disagreeing, regarding knowing their students' social surroundings, connections, and emotional well-being. However, 40% of teachers agreed, with another 40% strongly agreeing, that they encourage pupils to participate in classroom activities, whereas 8% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed.

4.2 Discussion

Findings from the study reveal key areas requiring attention:

***4.2.1 Restricted ICT Skills*:** The majority of participants noted a lack of training in current digital technologies, impacting their effectiveness in using online educational platforms. Some faculty members also struggle to integrate technology into their teaching methods, limiting the possibilities for blended and digital learning approaches.

4.2.2 Difficulties in Managing the Classroom: Many faculty members additionally reported issues with maintaining student participation and managing the classroom. Insufficient training in student-focused approaches and inclusive teaching strategies contributes to these difficulties.

4.2.3 Pedagogical Innovations: Traditional teaching methods continue to dominate, lacking focus on problem-solving abilities and interdisciplinary approaches. Faculty members highlighted the need to be introduced to innovative teaching strategies that promote student involvement and enhance problem-solving skills.

***4.2.4 Inadequate Student Evaluation Techniques*:** Educators expressed concerns over ineffective assessment approaches that undermine the effectiveness of feedback processes. The emphasis on traditional assessment methods cannot evaluate students' comprehensive learning progress and skill development.

4.2.5 Insufficient Professional Development Options: The participants noted that CPD programs are either infrequent or too broad and lack specific relevance to their teaching areas. The majority of faculty members emphasized the significance of structured, discipline-oriented training programs aligned with current academic and industry developments.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

To bridge the identified gaps, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.1 Incorporation of ICT Training: Universities ought to require frequent workshops focused on digital teaching methods, online educational tools, and remote assessment techniques. These training sessions must incorporate practical experience, practical uses, and ongoing assistance to guarantee successful execution.

5.2 Improvement of Teaching Skills: Training initiatives ought to emphasize engaging instructional methods, problem-resolution approaches, and cross-disciplinary education. Instructors ought to be motivated to embrace case-based learning, hands-on teaching techniques, and cooperative projects to boost student involvement.

***5.3 Updated CPD Framework*:** Organizations must customize CPD initiatives to meet faculty requirements, incorporating regular evaluations and revisions. A systematic assessment framework ought to be established to monitor the success of CPD programs and adjust training modules as needed.

***5.4 Policy Measures*:** Government and regulatory agencies need to dedicate resources for faculty training, encouraging involvement in advanced teaching certification initiatives. Policies ought to encourage collaborations with international organizations to enhance knowledge sharing and access to exemplary practices in higher education.

5.5 Introduction of Psychological Training: University educators ought to undergo training in student psychology, strategies for motivation, and emotional intelligence to enhance classroom interactions. Particular attention must be directed towards handling varied classrooms, alleviating student stress, and promoting a constructive learning atmosphere.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings underscore the urgent requirement for changes in faculty development programs at Indian universities. A well-structured CPD framework is essential, focusing on the incorporation of technology, enhancement of pedagogy, and student-centered learning. Colleges must provide ongoing learning opportunities for faculty, facilitating access to cutting-edge teaching techniques and digital resources. In addition, an interface with global academic institutions and industry experts can provide best practices and important insights to enhance faculty development. By addressing these obstacles, Indian higher education can enhance its teaching effectiveness, ultimately resulting in improved student learning results and national educational benchmarks, while fostering a more competitive and innovative academic environment.

VII. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This report recognizes the results, which could be beneficial in creating efficient ongoing professional development initiatives for educators. The results of this research can be used to identify deficiencies and assist scholars in enhancing their skills, which may result in greater career progression and job fulfillment. Organizations can leverage the information to focus resources on CPD programs that offer the most advantage, reducing unnecessary expenditure on generic or unrelated training. Policymakers can make certain that every educator, including those in disadvantaged or rural areas, can access CPD opportunities by tackling the particular challenges identified in the study. The results of the study could be beneficial for upcoming researchers. This research also offers insights to other Universities for the planning and development of CPD programs. This research will therefore add to the current and suggested CPD literature for higher education instructors in India.

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