

An Exploratory Study On Teacher's Awareness About The On-line Teaching Platforms And Its Role For The Professional Development With Reference To Nep 2020

Bhawna Mathur

Teacher

Directorate of Education , Delhi

Dr. Neetu Mishra Shukla

Associate Professor

Amity Institute of Education, Amity University, Noida (INDIA)

Abstract

NEP-2020 is a modern and comprehensive framework for the Indian educational system with the goal of giving everyone access to high-quality of education at different stages with the expectation of progressive and research-oriented development. The only person who can give students a high-quality education that meets both their needs and those of the community is the teacher. A teacher must become skilled so that they can meet the needs of various types of students. Therefore, it is essential for instructors to engage in ongoing professional development so they may learn about innovative and creative teaching methods. The present study intended to understand the teachers' awareness about the online teaching platforms available for professional developments of the teachers and its importance as per NEP-2020. The investigator used the survey method for the present study. Forty teachers were selected from government schools through convenient sampling techniques. It was inferred from the present study that most of the teachers were aware about the online teaching platforms and also completed some of the module designed for them. Some of the teachers agrees that these online teaching platforms has enhanced their teaching skills but very few disagrees. The findings further suggest that online teaching-learning platforms are user-friendly and enable teachers to boost their teaching competencies.

Keywords: Teachers, Online Teaching, NEP 2020, Professional Development

Introduction

Different theories of student learning and various theories of teacher learning are the foundation of professional development programmes. The only method available to educational systems to improve educators' performance levels is professional development. In order to improve their performance and boost student success, educators can only learn through professional development.

The only method available to educational systems to improve educators' performance levels is professional development. In order to improve their performance and boost student success, educators can only learn through professional development. Designing, implementing, and evaluating professional development to satisfy the needs of specific teachers in specific settings is necessary for it to have the greatest impact. But study on the

variety of methods has led to the identification of a number of characteristics of high-quality teacher professional development (Guskey, 2003).

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and NEP 2020

CPD is usually meant for the quality improvement of those who are already in the profession. CPD is a lifelong learning process that starts with ones' entry in the profession and continues throughout the career (Panda, 2001). CPD is viewed as a complete and complex learning process that includes all of the activities necessary to improve teachers' abilities and helps them in developing a wider variety of beliefs and attitudes in support of successful teaching methods. In order to develop the educational system in a tri-polar fashion, CPD gives teachers, students, and schools more authority (Phillips, 1991). According to Padwad and Dixit (2013), it is "a process of lifelong learning, both formal and informal, and includes both voluntary teacher initiatives and programmes externally planned and mandated by authorities" for teachers to grow after entering the profession. CPD is therefore advantageous for teachers as individuals and as groups, both individually and professionally, and it helps to raise the standard of the entire educational system. To understand the concept of CPD, the following important characteristics can be noted-

- CPD seeks to improve the effectiveness of the educational system by advancing teachers' skills, knowledge, and performance.
- CPD is not limited to individual activities, but collaboratives activities and experiences of learning also included.
- CPD is not restricted to one specific location,

such as a classroom or an institution, and it could happen anywhere, in the classroom, at the training facility, online, or even at home.

- Continuous professional development (CPD) is a lifelong learning process that draws from both formal and informal encounters.
- CPD acknowledges the voluntary learning efforts taken by teachers through the externally planned professional development programmes.
- CPD is a professional life process of learning, growing, and supporting tasks in formal or informal working environments.
- By advancing their professional knowledge, skills, and values, CPD seeks to support educational professionals' learning and development.

The NEP 1986 also recommended a comprehensive programme for teachers' professional development in the higher education sector. The NEP's action plan highlighted the critical connection between teacher motivation and educational excellence. It cleared the way for Academic Staff Colleges to be established in universities all over the nation. The NEP also recommended conducting orientation and refresher classes for working teachers in higher education, arranging specially designed orientation programmes in pedagogy, and encouraging teachers to take part in seminars, symposia, and workshops. National Curriculum Framework (2005) emphasized experiential learning for teachers to become active learners and learn by reflecting on their teaching practice. But unfortunately, despite having a changed and progressive ideology, the Framework gave more preference to in-service teacher education over CPD in its recommendations.

It recommended that school clusters will shoulder the responsibility of providing in-service training to teachers. The Framework also recommended splitting the mandatory days of in-service teachers' training over the year to instantly apply what new they have learned in their teaching practice and pre-service training.

The NEP 2020 delves upon various aspects of the CPD of teachers. Some of the aspects are-

- NEP 2020 proposes different CPD opportunities for teachers that covers, "... the latest pedagogies regarding foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and related pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling-based approaches, etc" (MHRD, 2020, p.22)
- "Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations and advances in their professions. These will be offered in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules "(MHRD, 2020, p.22).
- NEP 2020 also envisions that online platforms will help teachers share ideas and best practices related to their professions. Regarding the broader usage of technology for CPD purposes, the policy suggests, "The use of technology platforms such as SWAYAM/DIKSHA for online training of teachers will be encouraged, so that standardized training programmes can be administered to large numbers of teachers within a short span of time" (MHRD, 2020, p.43).
- The policy states that, "A common guiding set of National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) will be developed by 2022 which would cover expectations of the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/ stage, and the competencies required for that stage. It will also comprise standards for performance appraisal, for each stage, that would be carried out on a periodic basis" (MHRD, 2020, pp. 22-23)

Based on all these suggestions, it was noted that NEP 2020 has a more holistic and all-encompassing vision of CPD than previous policies. If compared to the previous policy documents, NEP 2020 shifted away from INSET and turned towards CPD. The policy recommendations make clear that firstly, it urges educators to step forward and accept accountability for their growth. And secondly, the policy recommends strengthening the current opportunities and provisions for teachers' CPD. In addition, the strategy anticipates that all teachers, whether in K-12 or higher education, will participate in CPD and gain from it.

Online Teaching and Learning Platforms

Web-based training, e-learning, distributed learning, Internet-based learning, web-based teaching, cyber learning, virtual learning, or net-based learning are all terms used to describe online learning (Urduan & Weggen, 2000). Online learning encompasses a wide range of computer-based learning platforms, delivery methods, genres, formats, and media, including multimedia, educational programming, simulations, games, and the use of new media on fixed and mobile platforms across all subject areas. Computer-based learning, web-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration are just a few examples of applications

and learning methods (Urdan & Weggen, 2000).

According to Bates and Sangra (2011), technology is the key factor for ensuring relevant and necessary changes in higher education transformation. Online teaching offers exciting opportunities to expand the learning environment for diverse student populations. Online teaching shares much with face-to-face teaching, but it also has a unique set of skills and requirements. The incorporation of technology into pedagogy has the potential to support adaptable, learner-centered instruction by promoting interaction between faculty and students and enabling asynchronous communication and collaboration. There are many digital initiatives for innovation in teacher education and professional development of in-service teacher. Some of these platforms are as follows-

1. DIKSHA and SWAYAM: DIKSHA and SWAYAM are a technology platform that for online teachers training. It encourages in its own way, as it has the freedom and choice to use the varied capabilities and solutions of the platform to design and run programs for teachers, learners and administrators. Teachers are assessing to global resources such as context, books, research contents, teaching-learning related text, audio, video, audio-video etc.

2. NISHTHA: NISHTHA stands for National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement where teachers are trained to use pedagogical arts to increase innovative idea, concept and creative thought among pupils, build the capability among teachers to move away from theoretical learning to practical or experiment learning and enhance the using capability of ICT in teaching-learning and assessment or evaluation process and many more aspect of teaching and

learning.

3. Chalk Lit: Chalk Lit is mobile application online platform for teachers which discover and share global knowledge, new concepts and pedagogical approaches. The main purposes of this platform are to provide content for improves classroom teaching, training on scholastic and co-scholastic topics and connect peer to peer micro-learning network. This platform also helps teachers to improve their teaching techniques through self-evaluation.

4. Centre for Teacher Accreditation (CENTA) is making teaching an aspirational profession by assessing and certifying the competencies of teachers, connecting them to career opportunities, rewards and recognition and supporting their professional development. CENTA equally help schools and systems to attract, develop, grow and retain teachers. This leads to a virtuous cycle where many more teachers are motivated to improve their competencies.

5. Firki – Teach for India Online: Firki is a digital free platform for World class online Teacher Education Portal where they are provided free contents to access anyone from anywhere. It also offers an opportunity to learn with expert faculties, peers and identify educator's strength and weakness them building skills on pedagogy, contents, e-learning, leading to improved student outcomes.

There are many ways in which we can continue to develop teacher's professional skills. Below are examples of various forms of professional development-

- Taught courses
- Self-study courses

- Programmes
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Networks
- Conferences

Professional development relies upon teachers, head teachers and leadership teams in schools and organisations providing professional development, being clear about their respective roles and working together effectively.

Purpose of the Study

The present study intended to understand the teachers' awareness about the online teaching platforms available for their professional developments its importance as per NEP-2020. In NEP 2020 it is mentioned that each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests, therefore it is important to explore the awareness among teachers about the scope of professional development from the already available platforms.

Research Questions

An inquiry that a study or research project seeks to address is known as a Research question. These questions frequently refers to a problem or issue, and conclusion of the study provides a response based on data analysis and interpretation. Some of the research question of the study are as follows-

- Are you aware about the online platforms that is available for the professional developments of the teachers?

क्या आप शिक्षकों के व्यावसायिक विकास के

लिए उपलब्ध ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म के बारे में जानते हैं?

- What do you think about the online platforms for teaching and training of the teachers as per NEP 2020?

एनईपी 2020 के अनुसार शिक्षकों के लिए ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म के बारे में आप क्या सोचते हैं?

- Do you think online teaching platforms are effective for teachers for their professional development?

क्या आपको लगता है कि ऑनलाइन शिक्षण मंच शिक्षकों के व्यावसायिक विकास के लिए प्रभावी हैं?

- What are your thoughts on the limitations of the online teaching platforms?

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म की सीमाओं पर आपके क्या विचार हैं?

Methodology

The investigator used the survey method for the present study. Questionnaire was developed with both open ended and close ended questions for the participants. Teachers were given the link of the online survey to participate in the research after their approval. Confidentiality of the participants were maintained throughout the research and their responses were used only for research purpose. 40 teachers were selected from the government schools through convenient sampling techniques in which 20 were male teachers and 20 were female teachers.

Analysis of Data

Data were analysed in both Qualitative and

Quantitative manner. Closed ended Questions were analysed in terms of means and percentage to understand about the information and awareness of the various training programmes attended by the teachers as well as about the various online teaching and learning platforms and its usefulness for their professional development. The Qualitative data were analysed using grounded theory where themes were developed after thematic analysis of the respondent answers. Thematic Analysis is done to identify, evaluate and make a theme expressed by participants (Galloway & Jenkins, 2005).

Findings

The results of the study revealed that the teachers are aware about the various software or applications through which professional developments were done in the previous years and were actively involved in the process of CPD. Teachers were at least using or downloaded one online teacher training platforms in their tablets or the mobile for their own in-service online teacher training conducted by their concerned department. Some teachers were also doing these training for the own benefit also. Majority of the teachers responded that during Covid years and till now there were many modules as well online webinars organized for their training through the various online platforms like Google Meet, Zoom, WebEx, etc.

The result of the survey on the aspects of satisfaction of teachers on the provision of online teachers training programmes reveals that 65 % of the surveyed teachers feels that the offered training in online teaching was “somewhat effective”, 29 % of the surveyed teachers think that the offered training was “complete effective” and 6 % of the surveyed teachers believed that training was “not effective”.

The survey responses showed that the participant teachers believes that the content of any teacher training should be as per the demand of the situation or help them in teaching the curriculum. Majority of the teachers responded that they have been trained through online teaching platforms about various application and administration of online teaching resources and also the selection of online teaching activities.

49% of the participant teachers faced little difficulty during their use of online teaching platforms either for their own training related to CPD or any other teaching activity. 20% of the teachers didn't face any difficulty whereas 31% of teachers felt extremely difficult to use the online teaching platforms.

Thematic Analysis showed that majority of the teachers think that interactive workshop or the in-service teachers training programme in face-to-face mode have their own impact as the participant get clarity about the content during the workshop or in the session only. Demonstration or Practical training session were also topic of concern for the participant teachers while using the online teaching platforms.

Discussions

Although there is positivity among various stakeholders regarding the online teacher professional development, there are still a number of issues that need to be resolved, particularly in emerging nations like India. At least for the developing world, the idea of online CPD in a completely digital and online environment is a relatively new one that has gained prominence in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and total shutdown. According to Bordoloi et al. (2020),

teachers should be motivated and shifting from chalk-talk to techno pedagogy was a big challenge as teachers lack motivation. Additionally, participating in CPD activities is widely recognised as the best strategy for helping instructors stay inspired and professionally fit. According to Alman and Tomer (2012), during online teaching there are opportunities to learn about the principles of instructional design and technology, online pedagogies, and emerging technologies. Therefore, online education would benefit faculty members by enabling them to grow their professional networks, share feedback and best practises, and improve their teaching and job portfolios (Alman & Tomer, 2012). In order to aid students in their overall growth, teachers must continue their own education throughout their careers. NEP 2020 measures will be useful in helping with the current CPD policies and practises with the use of Online training platforms like DIKSHA, NISHTHA, CHALKLIT, TISS, CENTA etc.

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