

## A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN ENGLISH FOR SECONDARY AND HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT LARKANA

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### ABSTRACT

Advancement in education is a continuous process which brings change and innovation in curriculum, methodology and evaluation or any other area of concern. Change in curriculum takes place at two levels; the content of the course (s) and teacher trainings, so that, the objectives of its modification be properly understood by the subject teachers for its effective and efficient delivery to the students in the classroom. Teaching of English at secondary and higher secondary levels has always been a challenge for curriculum developers, subject experts and teachers, since the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and students' achievement level in government schools and colleges with regard to knowledge and skills has never been satisfactory. Studies have shown that competency of English language teachers has been a major cause of students' poor performance. Many training programs for English subject teachers are being organized at different levels for the teachers to equip them with necessary latest knowledge and skills to make them good English teachers by the Government of Pakistan and Education Department, Government of Sindh but somehow the results of training do not match with the desired objectives.

**Keywords:** *Effectiveness, Teacher Training, Educational System*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a systematic and scientific process of providing knowledge, skills and experiences to develop a human force as per requirements of society. This is accomplished by using different methods and resources at different levels of education for different stakeholders like students, teachers, parents, administrators and others so that every individual of the society be equipped with the desired change in behavior to be social, cultural, sympathetic and helpful to the other members of society and for the nation. Educational institution is an important component of the system, where key role is played by the teachers. Teacher is the personality who initiates all curriculum related activities, motivate students to participate and learn from them and also help them to use the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practical situations. Teachers fulfill their obligations with sincere efforts in order to develop the youth of the nation to their full potential. So, for making an efficient education system, availability of effective teachers is the prerequisite and therefore on the top of every educational program, there is a provision of some sort of teachers' training and capacity building program. Usually the purpose of these teachers' training programs is to equip them with latest content knowledge, modern methodologies, use of advance

technology or other aspects of academic or administrative nature, so that they may fulfill their responsibilities to the fullest satisfaction of students, parents, society and above all their 'personal satisfaction' as a teacher, guide and facilitator.

It is believed that as a result of these training programs, teachers utilize their updated knowledge, experience, practices and well managed strategies to satisfy the challenging demands of their profession. If the teachers are properly educated, rightly guided, well trained and motivated, give better performance in and outside the classrooms. Without effective instruction and communication, a teacher cannot accurately deliver the subject content to the students, who in turn cannot correctly understand and reply in the class, nor write on the answer sheet, so the whole process of teaching and learning is sabotaged by ignoring and not properly addressing this one aspect of "effective interaction in the class between teachers and students".

At secondary and higher secondary levels although Urdu and Sindhi is allowed as the language of instructions in the classroom, but the preferred one is the English language. The issue becomes more important when it comes to English as a subject and as a language of instructions not only for the teachers of English but also for the students. Therefore, it is necessary to have if not a very good level of reading, writing, speaking skills, at least process a moderate satisfactory level of knowledge and competencies of English language. This is why at national and provincial levels; special training programs are conducted for teachers to improve English for general and specific purpose. Improvement of the profession of education lies in the hands of teacher education (Govt. of Pakistan, 1997). In order to furnish the prospective teachers with necessary teaching expertise and the development of professional tools and techniques, the teacher training programmes must be carefully and conscientiously planned, organized and evaluated. Since a teacher's success in the classroom lies on the effectiveness of teachers' training, it is believed that if one wants to assess the effectiveness of teacher training programmes with all other characteristics of the teaching learning process then observe the action inside the classroom. Teacher achievements in this respect are linked with acquired skills, knowledge, abilities and capabilities he owns (Glaser, 1989). According to Aggarwal (1993) for the teaching profession, a positive attitude and learned skills among prospective teachers are important as teacher education and trainings play a paramount role in teaching learning process. For the enhancement of quality of education and career development, teacher training programmes of professional teachers are essential whether pre-service or in-service (Rasul, 1992).

## **2. TEACHERS' TRAINING**

### *2.1 Teachers Training Institutions*

Pakistan has suffered from stagnation and has faced slow growth in education. In fact, teachers' training is extensively necessary as compared to writing textbooks. Both the teachers and students are integral part and participants of classroom learning process. In 1947, Pakistan had only 27 primary teachers training institutions and 6 teachers training colleges. Although, the number has now grown to 87 in case of primary teachers' institutions, 4 institutions of Research and Education, 2 department of Education affiliated with universities and 11 colleges of education preparing secondary school teachers. (Pakistan's National Education Policy 1998 – 2010), but much more is needed to bring professional attention as par with a developing nation.

## **2.2 Challenges of Teacher Training in Pakistan**

In Pakistan particularly in Sindh, there are various challenges in the field of teachers training. Most important of all, is the shortage of sufficient number of trainings for different areas like, curriculum development, teaching methodology, students evaluation, classroom management, planning and administration. Immediate in this aspect is the Quality of Teacher Training programs. The better a teacher is trained, the better he or she can educate tomorrow's generation of Pakistan. Additionally, teacher training puts positive impact on teachers and students' subject knowledge. In this way, the information shared by the teachers to facilitate children improve their knowledge but help to stay in school, and decrease low scores and dropout rate. In Pakistan in general and province of Sindh in particular, numerous English language and other training programs were launched at national, provincial and district level, but unfortunately these attempts proved to be only partially successful and not to the satisfaction of stakeholders.

## **2.3 The Context of English Language Trainings**

The importance of English language acquisition as a method of obtaining proficiency in other school subjects is well accepted. The English language knowledge is imperative for educational, economic and national progress of a country. The importance of English language as a school subject originates mainly from its functional value to the larger Pakistani society. English is the official language of administration and commerce. It is a major language of science which is used in all the educational institutions of the country and its substitution by other provincial or national language is less effective and sometime is not possible and rationale. It is therefore, the need of present time to put all efforts for improving the quality of spoken and written English language not only among school children in both private and public sectors but also in different walks of life in getting job opportunities in most of the service sector organizations. In recognition of the importance of English language for enhancing educational attainment as well as for improving communication abilities of citizens, the government has made 'English' a core subject. It is also compulsory for students to have a certain level of proficiency in English language before entering the university or professional institution, since Higher Education Commission (HEC) has made it compulsory for institutions of higher learning.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Purpose and Design of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of English language training programs for the public sector subject teachers of Sindh, with particularly reference to Larkana at secondary and higher secondary levels.

The research was designed in both qualitative and quantitative paradigms. This study was an evaluative study based on survey, interviews and observations. The design and method of the study was developed to generate the required data to address the purpose of the study.

### **3.2 Population and Sample**

#### **3.2.1 Population**

The population of the research study was comprised of all the trained teachers teaching English language subject in District Larkana who had received the trainings through teacher training programmes in English subject from any of the agencies worked in the area. One thousand and

fifty participants acquired training for English language teaching through local government from 2001 to 2004 while 30 other Junior School Teachers got training through Project Management Unit Sindh.

### 3.2.2 *Sample*

Since the population was large, stratified random sampling techniques were used. Thus, the sample of at least 200 trainee teachers was collected in district Larkana from different big and small, urban and rural, and boys and girls middle, high and higher secondary schools.

### 3.3 **Instruments and Data Collection**

This study was an evaluative study in nature and was conducted in a scientific ways to critically analyze the effectiveness of the teacher training programs in English language teaching for Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools. The researcher personally visited institutions administered questionnaire to the respondents and gave face to face instructions for clarification. They were requested to go through the general instructions first and then to respond.

### 3.4 **Findings**

On the basis of the research study for detection of the effectiveness of teacher training programmes in English, the following findings were drawn:

- The majority of teacher training programmes were not successful in professional skills development for the trained teachers.
- Learned skills were mostly not applied in the classroom and the same traditional practice was continued in the schools by the trained teachers.
- High scoring of the students was not the reason as the same traditional practice of copy culture.
- It was observed that English language played a very important role in understanding all the subjects and helped students learn every subject better.
- It was observed that teacher training programmes were advantageous only for the teachers who got personally wanted to get academic benefits from such programmes otherwise many teachers came for the sake of remuneration.
- Training programmes were launched to make teachers more skillful and objectives were set for the programmes, the objectives were achieved to some extent in the programmes but there was no implementation of those programmes and there was no follow up system to check whether the learned skills were being applied or not. Consequently, such programmes failed in practical way.

## 4. **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study was conducted to analyse the effectiveness of the teacher training programs conducted as per government's educational policies to provide quality education to the students through effective instructional methodologies, tools, techniques, and skills to the teachers at secondary and higher secondary level. These training programs aimed at building confidence, knowledge, self grooming, and skills to teachers. Besides this, English subject was particularly focused to provide both the teachers and students more opportunities to understand content of English as well as four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing). It was intended that the teachers to become capable of solving day to day problems of their students.

Indeed, measurement of effectiveness is considered a complex phenomenon. An effective questionnaire was developed in the light of review of literature and input from senior educationists and subject experts and validated using Likert Scale. The scale was tried out through pilot testing before final administration. The sample was drawn from all the secondary and higher secondary teachers' training programs of district Larkana held by different agencies/ organizations as Provincial Institute for Teacher Education (PITE), National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), De-centralized Elementary Education Project (DEEP), Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), Canadian International Development Agency (SIDA), and Local Government on English; such as Professional Skills Development, Capacity Building of Secondary Schools Teachers, Quality of Education etc. from the years 2000 to 2005. The number of total English language trainee was 200.

Findings of the study show that despite these trainings by a number of reputed organizations and allocating a major portion of budget by the governments no major achievements are seen in the teaching learning processes in educational institutions. It was also found that political influence was excessively exercised at the time of selection of teachers for the training. Irrelevant nominations were sent to the English language training program which resulted in unsatisfactory performance of the trainees, hence, the objectives of the training were not achieved. Further, there was no effective follow up strategy to measure the performance of these trained teachers in the classrooms.

Thus, the outcome of holding teacher training programs especially in the subject of English proved futile at a significance level hence it is recommended to depoliticise the process of selection of teachers for training programs. In place follow up mechanism at various stages of the program to measure the effectiveness during the process. Furthermore, refresher programs to be conducted for updating the knowledge of these teachers on regular basis.

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