Role of Academic Staff College in In-service Training for Professionals in Library and Information Science: A Case Study of Osmania University

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***Abstract** – The UGC-Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) have been actively conducting Orientation Programmes (First Level Programme) and Refresher Courses (Second level programme) for the in-service academic staff. The Orientation Programmes are of general in nature and Refresher Courses are subject specific and advance training programmes in specific fields. There are several training programmes for library professionals in India. Education for library science started as far back as first decade of twentieth century. UGC is endeavoring to a great extent to train academic staff. It also collects feedback from the participants course-wise. A consolidated study based on feedback would present a comprehensive picture of role of ASC Programmes in developing the skills and knowledge of academic staff. When it comes to the library science courses they need to meet the training needs of both teaching and library professionals. As the result of this study, in-service training helps the professionals to a great extent in broadening their approach. Only 45.0% of the participants opined that the training extends possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they gained from the training programmes to a great extent and 55% of them opined that it is to some extent and none opined that it is not at all possible. The quality of the contents of the in-service training, by and large, is good as only a higher percentage (59%) of the participants only stated that the quality is "very good" and 41% stated that it is "good". Majority of the participants did not state give high rating for all the aspects, however, by and large the resource persons are experts in their field with required capabilities.*

Keywords: University Grants Commission, Osmania University, Academic Staff College, HRDC, In-service Training, Orientation Programmes, Refresher Courses, Professional Training Programmes, Library and Information Science.

Introduction

The Academic Staff working in higher educational institutions need to update themselves, as these institutions deals with educational and research activity at higher level. But the facilities for training the academic staff of higher educational institutions in India were not adequately available. It was very difficult for the academic staff of Universities and Colleges to undergo training and update themselves. It was at personal level they used to struggle to update themselves.

The UGC-Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) have been actively conducting Orientation Programmes (First Level Programme) and Refresher Courses (Second level programme) for the in-service academic staff. The Orientation Programmes are of general in nature and Refresher Courses are subject specific and advance training programmes in specific fields,

there are all most 66 Academic Staff Colleges in India that have been conducting these programmes since 30 years.

Library and Information Science is an area where the Academic Staff consists of teaching and librarians / Professionals working in the libraries.   Training such groups will be more complex or complicated because the components that are relevant for teachers will be more or less, different from the areas of components that are relevant for library professionals. However, the teacher in the field of Library and Information Science would impart education on the areas that are relevant and useful for library professional work in Library and Information Centre. As the Librarian also associates themselves with teaching and research activity, some of the components that are exclusively relevant and useful to the teachers will also be relevant and useful to library profession. It is in view of this a study on role of Academic Staff Colleges in in-service training for professionals in library and information science (both teaching and professional librarians) would prove to be an interesting and significant study.

Review of Literature:

Rehman and Biswal (1992) made an attempt to analyse the evaluations already done by the participants of orientation programmes evaluation data of 12 ASCs (N = 1372). The aspects included in the study are; curricula, teaching-learning process, teaching and reference materials, impact of the programmes, physical facilities and duration of the programmes. Sisodia (1997) in the report on the major UGC research project entitled Academic Staff Development Programmes in Higher Education, tried to study the effectiveness of the ASCs in the country. He found that in spite of the adhocism in design, content and identification of the faculty, the ASC courses appeared to be quite logical. Pethe (1998) focused on refresher courses in social sciences especially in Economics and tired to identify diverse problems for which remedial measures were suggested. Maharana and Panda (2001) in his study explores the performance Evaluation, an effective tool for human resource management, can provide a useful tool method in developing required skills and competencies of the LIS staff in order to meet changing needs of the academic libraries today. The practical aspects of Performance Evaluation in libraries have been discussed and the paper exhaustively lists out various performance criteria essential for an LIS professional for evaluation and various modes of rating the individual performance. Kumaresan (2002) explained the changing scenario of the libraries due to development in technology and also discussed the changing role of the library and Information Professionals. To cope up with the new technology, every professional must have face new challenges. To meet the challenges, continuing education and training of the library and information science professional is essential. Das and Dutta (2002) defined training as a process which the personnel in an organization are deliberately offered, to enable them to absorb some new perspectives to cope with the emerging trends and techniques. Powerful instructing involves instilling critical thinking techniques, moral qualities and capacity to make social changes in the delicate personalities of youthful age. Tai, 2006, Bennett and Leduchowicz, 2007) Training is important for employee development. Training has positive impact on the employee performance and leads to organizational profitability and effectiveness Neetu Antil (2017). study investigates the different goals, strategies and usage of approaches made for the expert advancement of instructors in advanced teaching professionals.

Need for the Study

The literature review presented in chapter-3 shows that there are similar studies carried out in other states in India, However, these studies are on in In-Service Training Programmes or In-service training for teachers related, but not exactly on the role of UGC Academic Staff Colleges in developing the skills and updating the knowledge of academic staff in the field of Library and Information Science. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a study to find out the current scenario of Role that UGC ASC is playing in conducting In-service Training programme for Library Professionals. Thus, there is a gap in the field. Therefore, there is a need to fill the gap by conducting a study.

Objectives of the study:

The present study aims at finding out the role of UGC-ASC in In-Service Training for Professionals in Library and Information Science. In pursuance of this objective it also endeavors to find out :

1. To what extent the in-service training has impact on professionals broadening their approach.
2. To assess the usefulness of the training in skill development.
3. To what extent the in-service training extends the possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they gain from the training programme.
4. To evaluate the level of the contents of the in-service training.
5. To assess the quality of the content of the in-service training.
6. To assess the quality of training based on the feedback from the Participants on resource persons.

Scope and Limitations of the study:

There are 66 UGC sponsored (fully Funded) Academic Staff Colleges, throughout India in different states. All ASCs conduct training programmes to all disciplines, in-service teaching faculties. Therefore, this study confines only to Library Professionals attended to the training programme (Refresher Course) conducted by Academic Staff College at Osmania University.

As far as the study is concerned the In-Service Training has given to the Library Profession those who attended from 2002 to 2012. From the year 1989 to 2001 the ASC has conducted ten Refresher Courses in Library and Information Sciences .Assuming that the participants who attended between 1989 to 2001 would have retired, the data from that period was not taken for the research. From 2013 to till 2019 UGC has not allotted the Library and Information Science Course to UGC-HRDC, OU, Hyderabad.

Methodology:

To carry out the study, Case Study Method is applied. Thus it is a Case Study on Role of in-service training programme of UGC-ASC, Osmania University in improving the skills and upgrading the knowledge of the participants belonging to Library and Information Sciences. The study is based on Secondary Data, gathered from the feedback of the participants in the form of Teacher Response Schedule and Participants Response Schedule served to the participant during the course. The population of the study consists of participants who attended the in-service training at the UGC Academic Staff College, Osmania University.

There were about ten programmes conducted during 2002 to 2012 and total number of participants was 352. A sizable number of 334 response schedules submitted by all the participants of in-service training programmes conducted by the UGC-ASC, OU during the period of 2002-2012 are taken for the study. It implies that the study covers the entire universe of participants of nine refresher courses conducted during 2002 to 2012. The data extracted from these response schedules are analyzed. The percentages arithmetic mean, Chi-square tests and t-test are applied to draw inferences. The data are presented in tabular and suitable diagrammatic form.

The entire statistical analysis was done by using "Statistical Package for Social Sciences" (SPSS-17). Mathematical and Statistical tools such as percentage, arithmetic mean and Chi-square test and t-test were applied to analyze and interpret the data. Further, different diagrammatic presentations are used for effective presentation of the data.

Data Analysis:

Table-1: Distribution of Participants According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Male	256	76.6	76.60%
Female	78	23.4	100%
Total	334	100	

The Table-1 shows that, a majority of participants are male. However, this distribution is proportionate to certain extent. It is because of 30% reservation for women as imposed by the Centre and State Governments, the percentage of women employees is seen increased. But still the percentage of women employees is little less than 30%, inspite of this, it is in conformity with the prevailing situation in terms of gender distribution to considerable extent

Distribution of Participants on the Basis of Profession

The training programmes in library science are meant for both librarians (library professionals working in the libraries) and teachers of library science (such as assistant professors, associate professors, lecturers, and readers) i.e the faculty in teaching, Departments of Library and Information Science. In some states, the college librarians are also designated as lecturers of library science. Therefore, there isn't enough clarity to distinguish between the library professionals from the teaching staff. However, those librarians who are designated as lecturers or assistant professors of library science are also given some teaching assignments to train the student on effective use of a library and other similar training programmes. Therefore, the distribution of participants is based on the data provided by the participants with regard to their professional status namely Librarians and Teachers in Library and Information Science.

Table-2: distribution of participants on the basis of Profession

Professional Status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Library Professionals	165	49.4	49.4
Library Science Teaching Faculty	169	50.6	100
Total	334	100	

The above table-2 and graph shows that there is an almost even distribution of participants based on their professional status. Out of 334 participants, 169 (50.6%) of the participants are library science teaching faculty and 165 (49.4%) are library professionals.

Impact of Programme on broadening the approach of the participants

A training programme will certainly have a lot of impact on the participants in terms of the widening of their knowledge, change in their approach and skill development etc. However, the study also endeavors to find out whether the perception of the broadening the approach depends on the training programme.

Table-3: Impact of Programme on broadening the approach of the participants

Extent of the impact	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percent
To a great extent	232	69.5	69.5
To some extent	101	30.2	99.7
Not at all	1	0.3	100
Total	334	100	

The data in Table-3. shows the extent of broadening the approach of the participants. Majority of the participants 232 (69.5%) expressed that the programme has impact on broadening their approach "to a great extent". However, responses from 101 (30.2%) participants denote that their approach is broadened "to some extent". Only one participant (0.3%) felt the programme has "not at all" broadened his/her approach. Therefore, it can be inferred from these results that majority of respondents perceive that the programme has impact "to a great extent" on broadening their approach. Hence, the hypothesis "The in-service training helps the library professionals to a great extent in broadening their approach." is proved.

Gender vs. broadening the approach of participants

Perception may vary from gender to gender. However, the study proceeded with a null Hypotheses that reads as "the perception of the impact of the programmes in broadening the approach of the professionals does not differ on the basis of gender" analysis of the data is presented in the below table-4 to find out whether gender influences the perception of the participants.

Table-4: Gender vs. broadening the approach of participants

S. No	Gender	To a great extent	To some Extent	Not at all	Total
1	Male	176	79	1	256
		68.80%	30.90%	0.40%	100%
2	Female	56	22	0	78
		71.80%	28.20%	0.00%	100%
	Total	232	101	1	334
		69.50%	30.20%	0.30%	100%
Calculated Chi square = 0.316; Table value = 5.9915; df = 2; Level of Significance = 0.05					

The above table-4 presents the data on perception of the impact of the programmes in broadening the approach of the participants with the following options: (i) To a great extent, (ii) To some extent, (iii) Not at all. It is clear from the table that a great percentage of female participants, out of 78, 56 (71.8%) felt that the programme broadened their approach "to a great extent", 22 (28.2 %) of the participants expressed that it broadened their approach "to some extent" and there is no participants expressed that their approach is "not at all" broadened. An encouraging percentage i.e. out of 256, 176 (68.8%) male participants also perceived the impact of the programme "to a great extent"; in broadening their approach. 79 (30.9%) of the male participants expressed that the broadening of their approach is "to some extent". A small percentage 1 (0.4%) of participant said that the programme was "not at all" broadened their approach. From the above table it can be concluded that on the whole the majority of participants perceived that the broadening their approach is to a great extent.

Usefulness of training in skill development

The study proceeded to find out whether the training was useful in skill development for the participants. The usefulness of the training programme was measured on a three point scale that is adequately, not so adequately and not at all adequately useful in skill development.

Table-6: Usefulness of training in skill development

Skill Development	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Adequate	301	90.1	90.1
Not so adequate	32	9.6	99.7
Not at all adequate	1	0.3	100
Total	334	100	

The above table-6 shows the usefulness of the training programmes in skill development. Out of 334 participants, an overwhelming majority 301 (90.1%) of participants felt the programme was "Adequate" and only 32 (9.6%) of participants felt that the usefulness of training was "Not so adequate" in skill development. There was only one participant who felt the programme was "Not at all adequate" in skill development. As an overwhelming percentage i.e 90.1% of the participants perceived that the in-service training is useful skill development, the hypothesis "the in-service training is adequate in skill development of library profession", is proved.

Further, the research proceeded to study the perception of the participants with the regard to the training in their skill development differ on Gender, Qualification Designation, and Experience.

Possibilities of implementation of the knowledge acquired through the training

The aim of this study is to find out to what extent the training programmes extend the possibilities of implementation of knowledge they acquire through the in-service training. The data presented in the below table indicates the perception of the participants with regard to the extent the training extends the possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they acquired through the training.

Table-7: Possibilities of implementation of the knowledge acquired through the training

Possibilities of Implementation of the Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
To a great extent	150	45	45
To Some extent	183	55	100
Not at all possible	0	0	100
Total	334	100	

Data presented in Table-7 shows that out of 334 participants 150 (45%) of them felt that the possibilities of implementation of the knowledge was "to a great extent" and 183 (55%) of the participants felt that the possibilities of implementation of the knowledge was "to some extent". Since, only 45% of the participants feel that the training extends possibilities of implementation the knowledge they acquired, as it is not a majority, the hypothesis, "the in-service training help majority of the library professionals to a great extent by extending possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they acquired", is disproved.

Further, the research was done to study the perception of the participants with regard to possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they acquired through the training on the basis of gender, qualification, designation and experience. The results are presented in the following tables.

Assessment of the programme on relevance of the programme:

The assessment of the training programme is needed to know that the training programme was relevant to the in-service library professionals, who attended the programme. Therefore, to find out the opinion of the participants regarding the relevance of the programme. The study proceeds to give the details of the analysis.

Table-8: Relevance of the training programme

Relevance	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Relevant	318	95.2	95.2
Not so relevant	16	4.8	100
Irrelevant	0	0	
Total	334	100	

The above table-8 presents the data on opinion of the participants in regarding the relevance of the programme with the following options: (i) Relevant, (ii) Not so relevant, (iii) Irrelevant. It is clear from the table that a great percentage participants out 334, 318 (95.2.%) felt that the programme was "Relevant" to the profession, only 16 (4.8%) of the participants expressed that the training programme was :not so relevant". Non of the participant expressed the training was "irrelevant". From the above analysis it can be concluded that on the whole the participants expressed that the training programme was relevant to their profession. Further, the research was done to find out whether there is a relation between the demographic variables of gender, qualification, designation and experience on opinion of the participants.

Designation vs. relevance of the training programme

Designation may impact the perception of the professionals.   Therefore, the specific hypothesis that is "perception of the relevance of the training does not depend on the designation of the participants", is tested and the following presents the results:

Table-9: Designation vs. relevance of the training programme

Sl No.	Designation	Relevant	Not so relevant	Irrelevant	Total
1	Library Professionals	160	5	0	165
		97.00%	3.00%	0.00%	100%
2	Library Teaching Professionals	158	11	0	169
		93.50%	6.50%	0.00%	100%
	Total	318	16	0	334
		95.20%	4.80%	0.00%	100%
Calculated Chi square = 2.362; Table value = 5.9915; df = 2; level of significance=0.05					

Table-9 shows that almost equal percentage of the participants belonging to different groups of designation perceive that the training programme is relevant. Hence it can be concluded that designation does not influence the perception of the participants on the relevance of the training programme. The Chi Square test also shows that there is no significant difference among the participants with different designations. The calculated Chi-square value 2.362 is less than the table value 5.9915at two degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This denotes that there is no significant difference between and among the participants with different designations regarding the perception of relevance of the training programme.

Major Finding of the study:

- It is found out that the in-service training helps the professionals to a great extent in broadening their approach
- It is found out that the usefulness of the training in skill development is adequate.
- It is found out that only 45.0% of the participants opined that the training extends possibilities of implementation of the knowledge they gained from the training programmes to a great extent and 55% of them opined that it is to some extent and none opined that it is not at all possible
- It is found out that the level of the contents of the training programmes, is adequate.
- It is found out that the in-service training is relevant to the professional needs of the participants.
- It is found out that the quality of the contents of the in-service training, by and large, is good as only a higher percentage (59%) of the participants only stated that the quality is "very good" and 41% stated that it is "good". As there is no majority under both the ratings, the generalization with "very good" rating cannot be made, however, it can be, doubtlessly concluded that the quality is "good" with the above ratings.
- It found out that majority of the participants felt that the level of the subject dealt with the resource persons is adequate. From the above it can be concluded that though majority of the participants did not state give high rating for all the aspects, however, by and large the resource persons are experts in their field with required capabilities.

Conclusion:

Academic staff training proved to be imperative to develop the academic standards. Credit goes to University Grants Commission and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India for convening, establishing ASCs and offering the training programmes. Way back in late 1980s if self it was the industry that was offering training to newly recruited employees but the Universities and colleges did not have that facility as a consequence the teaching faculty and other academic staff in the Universities and colleges had dire needs for training to update themselves. They were very much deprived of such opportunities. Thanks to the new Educational Policy that had recognized the need for training the Academic Staff.

So far 66 ASCs are establishment throughout country that they have been endvourning to extend Orientation courses, Refresher Courses and Workshops and so on covering almost all subjects offered by the Universities. So far Lakhs of Academic Staff are trained by the UGC ASCs is a big success. Due to which the quality of education as improved to considerable extent. However, till more care taken to improve the quality of them proves as there will be no unit of perfection. The UGC ASCs would render a commendable serviced to the nation though its their in-service training programmes. Of course, much more importance have taken place in training programmes during recent times. In every programme Micro-teaching, Seminar presentation, Group Seminar presentation, Library hours, skill developments, such as Yoga classes , environment classes, legal aspects, Library use , stipulation of hundred percentage of attendance have all contributed to require refinements in training programmes. There are also evaluate team for Micro-teaching and Seminar presentations, and multiple choice questions test.

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