

UGC-Human Resource Development Centres and Faculty Training in Indian Higher Education Sector

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ABSTRACT

Higher education in India is running through a crossroads especially in the context of NEP 2020, questionable learning outcomes of Indian graduates, decreasing quality education, faculty shortage for a long time and poor quality of students' transition from school education to higher education. In such conditions, faculty recruitment and training for higher education are heavily loaded with high expectations from fresh recruits in Indian higher education Institutions as a faculty to deal with students and the system. The UGC-Human Resource Development Centres earlier known as Academic Staff Colleges have almost sole responsibility of faculty training and development in higher education system, besides some programmes run under PMMMNMTT for last few years. This particular paper gazes into the capacity building of higher education faculty along with the expenditure incurred upon these fresh recruits. Besides, refresher programmes for the experienced faculty members of higher education and short terms professional development programmes are also analyzed for the larger understanding of the issues, concerns and status of capacity building and role of HRDCs in faculty training in Indian Universities and Colleges.

Keywords: Faculty Training, Capacity Building, Higher Education, UGC-HRDC

Education and training are central to the concept of academia in higher education sector across the globe. There has been a long debate over the need of post-formal higher education training before the entry into academic profession in the universities and colleges. With the implementation of NEP 1986 and PoA 1992, the higher education training institute came into picture by establishing Academic Staff Colleges across the universities on regional basis in India. University Grants Commission has established 66 Academic Staff Colleges now named as Human Resource Development Centres across the Central and State Universities in India. During the 12th five year plan, a separate ranking of all ASCs/HRDCs was conducted by the NAAC and found that very few of them were well performing and majority of these ASCs/HRDCs were under-performing institutions. Subsequently, University Grants Commission initiated to restructure and

reform these ASCs/HRDCs in a more effective and result oriented direction.

Status of HRDCs in Capacity Building

UGC in 2015 came with the proposed reform in capacity building and professional training for the faculty of higher education institutions in India. The concept of Human Resource Development is given by the UGC in 2014-15 by renaming Academic Staff Colleges, besides a Regional Centre for Capacity Building (RCCB) was also proposed in the universities of different regions in the country. Although, the idea of RCCB could not be launched with the spirit it was initiated, but largely taken

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over by the larger scheme called Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNTT) in the year 2014. With the advent of this scheme, the responsibility of capacity building and professional training of higher education faculty got distributed between HRDCs and PMMMNTT. The present paper will attempt to glance at the capacity building and professional training programmes offered by the HRDCs and PMMMNTT. Further, the programme-wise and institution wise analysis with respect to the variety of training with special reference to capacity building is presented in detail.

The table 1 shows the status of capacity building programmes approved and organized by the ASCs/HRDCs from the year 2002-03 to 2018-19. During the last eighteen years 420643 faculty from different higher education institutions were training for capacity development and professional enrichment in their concern subjects. During the last six years, about Rs. 50 Cr./ Year has been spent in the capacity building institutions for refresher courses, orientation programmes, and short term trainings. UGC-ASCs/HRDCs have trained an average number of 25000 participants in the last

two decades shows a routine and stagnant rate of capacity building in higher education. Indian higher education has observed an exponential growth of two to three-folds during last three decades. Number of institutions and faculty members has also grown manifold. But, the number of faculty training through capacity building programmes has been stagnant and not grown at all. However, a greater responsibility was given to the HRDCs and RCCBs in 2014-15 guidelines, yet it is far from achievement as reflected in the above table and in the poor and routine status of these capacity building institutions across the years. The increasing number of training programmes will be an indicator of reform in higher education in India. Both UGC-HRDCs and programmes under PMMMNTT need to be reformed as per the guidelines of the NEP 2020 implementation plans.

Although, there are continuous growth observed in Indian higher education across the years in terms of enrolment, institutional establishment and decreasing student-teacher ratio by increasing number of faculty still, employment rate has been decreasing, learning outcomes are falling and authorities doubted on the quality education across

Table 1: Achievements of Academic Staff Colleges (Now HRDCs) for Capacity Building in Higher Education in India

Session	No. of Orientation Programmes	No. of Refresher Courses	No. of Faculty Participants	Fund allocated by UGC to ASCs/HRDCs	
1	2002-03	147	497	21330	—
2	2003-04	171	750	33700	—
3	2004-05	180	850	32000	—
4	2005-06	200	500	21000	—
5	2006-07	150	600	20000	—
6	2007-08	213	689	22800	—
7	2008-09	230	710	25000	—
8	2009-10	320	710	40000	—
9	2010-11	260	697	26420	—
10	2011-12	240	780	27460	—
11	2013-14	—	—	29072	56.65 Cr.
12	2014-15	—	—	27790	46.88 Cr.
13	2015-16	—	—	22235	51.88 Cr.
14	2016-17	—	—	21836	47.52 Cr.
15	2017-18	—	—	25000	68.59 Cr.
16	2018-19	—	—	25000	44.22 Cr.
Total			420643		

Source: UGC Annual Reports 2002-03 to 2018-19

the professional disciplines¹. The trend of delayed appointments in higher education sector, especially in the state funded institutions, has been a key factor in decreasing quality in higher education institutions in India. UGC has specially instructed all the institutions of higher learning to recruit the vacant position on immediate basis latest by the end of September 2022. Still there is no hope of getting the vacancy filled in higher education institutions soon, since many institutions have not completed and many has not even started the process irrespective of repeated instructions by the UGC.

Sustainability of higher education in the contemporary 21st century depends upon the standards of the institutions, quality and well trained with updated knowledge faculty, the availability of the educational resources, advance ICT and E-technologies' integration into classroom and learning process and inculcation of all the above needs among the prospective faculty of higher education in the state funded Universities and colleges. So far the HRDCs/ASCs have routinely trained the faculty of higher education without any reform in training as needed in the contemporary time. Besides, there is no uniformity in the education and training provided by these capacity building institutions, in fact it is largely based on the convenience and past practices. The UGC guidelines of HRDCs and RCCBs as created in the year 2014-15 by the UGC also suggested and directed these institutions to reform the staff training and capacity building programmes as per the contemporary need of the institutions and faculty requirements. The NEP 2020 has also emphasized on the technological integration, making training and development for capacity building more contemporary, use of E-resources and blended teaching-learning, etc as integral part of HRDC's training to make it more result oriented. Faculty training and development are the need of the hour in higher education especially in the market driven contemporary Indian society where capacity building institutions can play a pivotal role.

¹AICTE, FICCI, The Hindu Survey have repetitively exposed that majority of the engineers Indian institutions are producing are not up to the mark and not having knowledge and skills for employability. Justice Verma Commission Report 2012 revealed that 80% of the teacher-education institutions are just degree selling institutions and not imparting knowledge and education as required in the profession.

CONCLUSION

Capacity building and professional training of faculty of higher education is key to quality education. Lack of adequate faculty in Indian universities and colleges has been repetitively highlighted during the last decade. There is no established mechanism to train and educate faculty of higher education through a well defined methodology. Therefore, the role of Academic Staff Colleges now known as Human Resource Development Centres is crucial in capacity building. Although, PMMMMNMTT has also started to contribute into the staff training and capacity building yet the stagnant number of faculty training across the years is a matter of great concern. Besides, there is no refresher programme and even short term training programme organized by the UGC-HRDCs for which has been derived out of need-based analysis across states unlike in other professional education sectors. There is a need to first include the contemporary and need-based training in an independent manner of through an integrated approach through refresher programmes, orientations programmes and short term training programmes through HRDCs across the country. UGC-HRDCs will play a vital role in capacity building of faculty of higher education and especially for the development of this particular sub-sector.

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