

SIXTH MEETING OF THE THINK TANK – TEACHER EDUCATION

State Policy on Continuing Professional Development of Education Functionaries

(A Report)



Venue : Hotel Mayfair Convention, Puri
Duration: March 15, 2016



Directorate of TE & SCERT
Odisha, Bhubaneswar

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Think Tank TE is a collaborative initiative of the Government of Odisha and Unicef, Odisha with an uncompromising commitment to transformative reform in the teacher education system of the state. Consisting of 30 (18 national level members and 12 state level members) teacher education experts of national and international repute and recognition, Think Tank – TE has assiduously strived to envision the contours and directions of reform. Reflection, dialogue, debate, dissent and consensus-building have been the defining markers of this academic group. Their varying perspectives, through a rigorous and passionate discourse, have been moulded to an eclectic vision. Since October 2013, it has held several consultations on critical issues impinging the reform agenda.

Continuing Professional Development: A State Policy on Continuing Professional Development of Education Functionaries has been developed with a huge investment of time, efforts and resources but without any visible impact on teachers and their classroom practices. All such programmes become meaningful if and only when they make a difference to the quantum and quality of children's learning. Pro-active action in this regard were : first, absence of a holistic and comprehensive policy for professional development of teachers, teacher educators, education supervisors, institution heads and a host others; second, functioning of training providing organisations in total isolation and convergence among them; third, programmes are almost totally not rooted to teachers needs and classroom demands; fourth, the dysfunctional programme management system; and fifth, the programme delivery mechanisms – nothing more than dry and drab lecture method, marked by a culture of silence.

The Concept:

- The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) of adopts a broad definition of professional development among teachers:
"Professional development is defined as activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher."
- The definition recognises that development can be provided in many ways, ranging from the formal to the informal. It can be made available through external expertise in the form of courses, workshops or formal qualification programmes, through collaboration between schools or teachers across schools (e.g. observational visits to other schools or teacher networks) or within the schools in which teachers work. In this last case, development can be provided through coaching/mentoring, collaborative planning and teaching, and the sharing of good practices.
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines CPD as "activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, and their other characteristics as a teacher. The definition recognises that development can be provided in many ways, ranging from formal to informal." (McCulloch, et al, 2011)
- CPD is a long-term and complex process, which we understand as "...a planned, continuous and lifelong process whereby teachers try to develop their personal and professional qualities, and to improve their knowledge, skills and practice, leading to their empowerment, the improvement of their

agency and the development of their organisations and their pupils.’
(Padwad and Dixit, 2011:10)

Quality with Equity: State’s concern for and commitment to enhance quality with inclusion has moved to the centre stage. Simplistic quantitative expansion of the system has giving way to qualitative transformation. In the broadest sense, quality with inclusion means: (i) all children have the right to quality education; (ii) all children can learn and have a desire to learn; and (iii) the education system must respond to the needs of all children. Levels of children’s learning need to be substantially higher and sustainable. A nation can ignore this imperative only at the cost of children and nation’s development. Quality learning has become non-negotiable.

Centrality of Teachers: Teachers are the frontline providers of quality education. Their subject knowledge competence, pedagogical skill sets, inter personal relationships, professional preparation and development etc. are the prime determinants of what children learn and at what level they learn. A competent teacher adequately trained and appropriately empowered makes a huge difference to classroom processes and children’s learning. In brief, teacher’s competence is a function of: (i) his / her general education background; (ii) adequacy of professional preparation and development; (iii) his / her propensity towards learning throughout life; and (iv) his / her professional commitment to children. In the absence of such teachers, even the best of curriculum and textbooks are of little significance. It is teachers and teachers alone who really make a significant difference to children’s learning.

Lots of Training without Visible Impact: Even since the National Policy on Education (1986 / 1992), followed by series of externally financed (World Bank, DFID, European Commission), SSA, RMSA etc., teachers have been expose to spirals of in-service training programmes. Paradigm shifts have been made in designing of curriculum and textbooks, methodologies of teaching, classroom practices and evaluation procedures. This notwithstanding, levels of children’s learning have been unacceptably low. This declining learning levels have been established by a series of research studies, more particularly by the PRATHAM’s Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) over the last decade. Despite teachers’ exposure to several rounds of training programmes and huge investment made, classroom processes have remained remarkably unchanged. Levels of children’s learning have not nudged a little higher. It appears to be ironical: more things change, the more they look alike.

Teacher Education–The Prime Mover: Investment of efforts and initiatives, and resources in teacher education can yield rich dividends. Its pre-service and in-service programmes are inseparable; they tend to reinforce each other. These two components greatly influence teachers’ performance and in turn, children’s learning. Quality of school education is, therefore dependent on how teachers are prepared and developed through the teacher education system. Reform in teacher education- lock, stock and barrel – is likely to bring in transformative change in the school education system. It’s an acknowledged fact that the teacher education system of our country is at risk. Recognising the deficit-ridden state of teacher education system, the School and Mass Education Department has constituted a Think Tank for Teacher Education for a holistic and comprehensive development of the system in the state.

The Draft Policy on CPD: The process of policy formulation has been preceded by several rounds of reflective sessions among the Think Tank – TE members, more pronouncedly by state level members primarily due to their proximity to the locus of action (Think Tank – TE being located in SCERT) and their commitment to the teacher education system of the State of which they have been an integral part. In the meantime, we have received critical inputs from the national level members for fine-tuning the draft. The present meeting provides a structured platform for initiating reflective dialogue among all of you who have a passion for dreaming of a better and stronger teacher education system in the state.

The state is committed to put in place a holistic and comprehensive policy. Possibly, ours is the first state to initiate such a move well ahead of other states.

The objectives: This policy seeks to achieve the following objectives in respect of the teachers, teacher educators and other education professionals (stakeholders) associated with the enhancement of quality of elementary and secondary school education in the state:

- Increasing access of stakeholders to high quality continuing professional development programs and courses designed to support improved student learning at the elementary and secondary school levels.
- Supporting the knowledge, skills and capabilities of stakeholders by providing appropriate recognition for undertaking continuing professional development
- Increasing participation of stakeholders in continuing professional development
- Enabling stakeholders to take responsibility for their own continuing professional development.

The Principles of CPD

The CPD framework needs to embed the following three principles:

- CPD involves critical reflection, development and strengthening of practice.
- CPD is flexible, relevant and integral to an individual teacher's professional practice.
- CPD acknowledges the importance of teacher's scholarship and professionalism.

Professional Development Practices

- There are many definitions of professional development. Most refer to both formal and informal learning experiences and processes that lead to deepened understanding and improvement of practice.
- The professional development practices for mid-career or experienced teachers are generally viewed as part of the continuum of learning of teachers throughout their careers.
- Effective professional development strongly links teacher and student learning and is guided by data.

- Research highlights that effective professional development must be personalized and responsive to the complex and unique needs and context of the learner.
- Collaboration, shared inquiry and learning from and with peers have been identified as central to professional development.
- Effective professional development needs to be sustained, ongoing, in-depth, requiring active engagement by the professional. Short term, “one-shot”, “pull-out” programs are seen to be ineffective in changing or developing practice.
- There are recent efforts to offer more systemic, comprehensive research-informed approaches to professional development in Ontario and around the world. At the same time, connecting individual learning with larger initiatives and change processes is seen as key to sustainability and support.
- A wide range of practices is seen to be effective in various settings. These practices include: collaborative learning, peer-assisted learning, teacher researcher, teacher-as-student, independent learning and integrated approaches.

Possible Outcomes of CPD

Harland and Kinder (1997) suggested the following nine possible types of outcomes of CPD:

- **Materials and resources** – provisions for teaching, such as worksheets or activities
- **Informational outcomes** – fact-based information, e.g. about new policies or schemes
- **New awareness** – a perceptual shift, teachers becoming aware of new ideas and values
- **Value congruence** – the extent to which teachers’ own values and attitudes fit in with those which the CPD is trying to promote
- **Affective outcomes** – how teachers feel emotionally after the CPD, may be negative (e.g. demoralised) or positive (e.g. confidence)
- **Motivation and attitude** – such as enthusiasm and determination to implement changes.
- **Knowledge and skills** – both curricular and pedagogical, combined with awareness, flexibility and critical thought
- **Institutional outcomes** – on groups of teachers, such as consensus, collaboration and support
- **Impact on practice** – The ultimate aim of CPD: what effect does it have on the pupils?

Considerations for Professional Development

- Important components of professional development are:
 - ✓ the linking of professional development to student learning and professional standards for learning

- ✓ providing many varied learning processes and practices within a learning framework,
- ✓ incorporating assessment of both professional growth and attainment of program goals
- ✓ ensuring reflection and forward planning are part of the pd cycle
- An integrated design that focuses upon student and teacher learning, linking to the larger system and incorporating a range of possible learning activities within a job-embedded context is recommended in the literature.
- There is recognition that evidence-based knowledge and practice should form the content of professional development.
- Effective professional learning requires time, resources and supportive structures.

Professional Learning and Professional Development

Professional learning and professional development are often used interchangeably by teachers and providers. These two terms are differentiated in this policy.

- **Professional learning** refers to the growth of expertise of teachers, teacher educators and other education professional that leads to improved student learning. Professional learning is demonstrated through practice and can be measured through the accreditation process.
- **Continuing professional learning** is needed to keep abreast of new developments in curriculum and pedagogy arising from the changing and evolving educational, social and cultural contexts in which teachers work and students learn.
- **Professional development** refers to the processes, activities and experiences that provide opportunities to extend professional learning of teachers, teacher educators and other education professionals. *Participation in continuing professional development assists in the development of professional learning.*
- An **integrated continuing professional development approach** that provides for both site-based and external professional development allows stakeholders and schools to develop their professional learning and expertise.
- Teachers, teacher educators and other education professionals also contribute to their professional growth by participating in **collegial professional practice**. Professional development is most effective when undertaken in this manner. Working collegially facilitates access to multiple learning pathways that cater for the diversity of contexts, experience, educational level, subjects/disciplines, background, learning purposes and learning styles for all stakeholders.

Types of Continuing Professional Development Activity

There are many types of CPD, which can help teachers, teacher educators and other education professionals at every stage of their career, and suit their own interests and availability of time. The main areas of activity are:

- developing a reflective approach to their work
- expanding the skills and knowledge through working with resources
- sharing and learning with other stakeholders
- participating in training workshops and courses.

Among several ways for continuing professional development, some of the major types are:

- Courses Training and workshops
- Conferences and Seminars
- Professional Groups/Associations
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Participation in Open Educational Resources (OERs)
- Materials
- Induction and Mentoring
- Observing/Experiencing/Experimenting Innovative Practices
- Peer Observation/Learning
- Specialising
- Social Networking/ Professional Development Networks
- Research and Evaluation
- Publications
- Reflection/ Self-Assessment
- Mobile-phone-based learning (M learning)

Policy Formulation and Implementation

- Specification of objectives (for each category of stakeholders)
- Professional Learning Advice
 - ✓ The Professional Learning Endorsement and Advisory Committee (PLEAC): Constitution, (To be located at the SCERT)
 - ✓ Role specifications of the PLEAC
- Regulation of Providers of Continuing Professional Development
- Regulation of Stakeholders' Participation in Continuing Professional Development
- Other Activities

Process-related Concerns

- CPD mostly based on training, especially in-service training of teachers. Other activities are rarely adopted.
- Reduced as a ritual with little follow up activity
- Transmissionistic approach is dominantly followed
- Training programmes follow a 'top – down' approach in planning
- Teachers are treated as 'objects' in the training rather than 'change agents'.
- Lack of awareness of monitors, supervisors and academic support providers regarding the training inputs which disturbs teachers' beliefs performance

- Collegial/peer interactions during MSM are reduced to official activities.
- Innovative activities are rarely recognized
- Reflective thinking is rarely encouraged
- Open Education Resources are yet to be familiar to teachers

PROGRAMME AGENDA

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(State Policy On Continuing Professional Development Of Education Functionaries)

Date and Time : 10.00 am., March 15, 2016

Venue : Hotel Mayfair Convention, Bhubaneswar

PROGRAMME AGENDA

10.00 am. – 10.30 am.	:	Registration
10.30 am. – 11.00 am.	:	Inaugural Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Guest : Prof. H.K. Senapaty, Member Think Tank - TE • Chairperson : Prof. A.B. Ota, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Director, TE and SCERT, Odisha
Technical Session I and II 11.00 am. – 1.30 pm.	:	Technical Session I : State Policy on CPD : Background, Principles and Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiator : Prof. S.L. Jena, Lead Coordinator Think Tank-TE Technical Session – II : CPD : Process related Challenges and Policy Imperatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiator : Dr. M.M. Mohanty, Member Think Tank-TE Chair : Prof. Anita Rampal, Member Think Tank-TE
1.30 pm. – 2.15 pm.	:	Lunch
Technical Session III 2.15 pm. – 3.00 pm.	:	CPD: Sharing Lessons from Educational Change Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiator : Prof. Sashi Nair, Member Think Tank-TE CPD: Systemic Challenges and Policy Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiator : Dr. D.C. Rana, Member Think Tank-TE Chair : Prof. B.N. Panda, Member Think Tank - TE
Technical Session IV 3.00 pm. – 3.45pm.	:	Leveraging ICT Potential for CPD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiators : Prof. Rajaram Sharma, Member Think Tank -TE • Dr. Sitanshu S. Jena, Member Think Tank -TE Chair : Prof. H.K. Senapaty, Member Think Tank - TE
Valedictory Session : 4.00 pm. – 5.00 pm.		
Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Address : Smt. Ranjana Chopra, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, S & ME Department • Think Tank – TE : Concept, Genesis and Process - Prof. S.L. Jena, Lead Coordinator, Think Tank -TE • Think Tank – TE : Some Reform Initiatives : Dr. M.M. Mohanty, Member Think Tank-TE • Mentoring of Teacher Educators : Prof. Thomas Vadaya, Member Think Tank – TE • CPD : Harnessing ICT Potential : Prof. H.K. Senapaty, Director, NCERT, New Delhi and Member Think Tank-TE • Sharing of views of Experts: Open Discussion Observations : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Louis-George Arsenault, Representative, India Country Office, Unicef, New Delhi • Ms. Karin Hulshof, Regional Director, Unicef Regional Office South Asia, Kathmandu • Smt. Ranjana Chopra, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, S & ME Department, Chairperson • Prof. A.B. Ota, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Director, TE and SCERT, Odisha – Vote of Thanks 		

