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ABSTRACT

Professional development is being considered by the educationists as an essential requirement in present educational scenario. Educational attainment of the children depends to a large extent on the quality of the teacher. **Professional development awareness** of school teachers is affected by a number of variables such as socioeconomic status, experience, personality characteristics, academic background, values, social acceptance, academic background and teaching aptitude etc. (**Francis, 2005**). Job satisfaction is also a very important factor which has a significant impact on the professional development efforts and practices made by the professionals (**Roy, 2007**). Earlier studies conducted by **Babu (1992)** and **Ahmed (1986)** revealed that there exists a positive relationship between teachers' professional development efforts and their job satisfaction. Specifically, **Ahmed (1986)** reported that highly satisfied teachers are quite interested in growing themselves as per the demands of their profession. They participate more in research and show more interest in the instructional phases of their job. **Luo, Y. (2011)** revealed that most of the professional development activities and policies framed by the Govt. are wasted or don't give desirable outcomes due to this lack of professional development awareness. Studies also proved that despite of the efforts put in by the Govt. and various agencies for the Professional Development of school teachers nothing seems out to be making much difference and bring some fruitful results in this direction. The present study has been conducted for fulfilling the following objectives.

- To study the Professional Development Awareness among secondary school teachers of Delhi in relation to their age, sex, status, experience, educational qualification and stream of teaching.
- To identify the various modes of professional development being practiced by the secondary school teachers of Delhi.
- To study the problems being faced by the school teachers in pursuing their professional development activities.
- To identify the facilities being provided to the school teachers of Delhi in pursuing their professional development activities.
- To identify and describe the most and least perceived Professional Development needs of the school teachers.

- To make suggestions regarding the professional development awareness and the practices of school teachers, arising out of the findings of the study.

As per the nature and objectives of the present study descriptive survey method of educational research was followed in this study. All the Govt. and Govt.-aided schools in 28 zones of Directorate of Education Delhi constituted the population for this study. Multistage Random Sampling has been used for the selection of the sample and purposive and convenient sampling was used for the selection of Principals for Interview schedule and Focus Group Discussions and the final sample consisted of five Educational Zones, fifty Schools, Fifty Principals, and Four Hundred Teachers. After a detailed analysis of the data obtained from school teachers and principals through various tools of research involved during the study i.e. Questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion and Semi-structured Interview the findings from the study revealed that the primary purpose of professional development programs and in-service training is to prepare and support teachers by equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need in their profession and which would be helpful for all students in achieving high standards of learning. Despite the recommendations given by various commissions and committees and the efforts being made by the IASEs, NCERT, SCERT, NCTE and DIETs a little has been done to ensure the fulfillment of professional development needs of the in-service school teachers. In-service training of school teachers is a critical and uphill task and care should be taken to maintain a healthy climate of coordination among the various stakeholders engaged in the job of professional development of school teachers in order to assure the success of such programs. Professional Development Awareness is also a very important factor, as revealed in the present study which is directly linked to the various background variables of the practicing teachers. The level of Professional Development Awareness among school teachers plays a very important role as revealed during the study in their professional progress. For professional development programs to be successful it is very essential that they are planned keeping in mind the practicing teachers' existing professional development needs and practices. Besides it they should have clear and specific goals/objectives, research based and up-to-date content, the participants who are actively involved and self-motivated and consist of multiple training sessions over an extended period of time. The department should also try to ensure that the school teachers should be aware of various modes of professional development along with an access to up-to-date knowledge of best practices available in their subject field and teaching methods in the curricular areas they are required to teach and to deal with. The findings of the study are significant enough to improve the professional development of school teachers in India in general and Delhi in particular. All the stake holders in the field of education e.g. teachers, administrators, policy makers and researchers can initiated some specific reforms from this study to improve the status of professional development in our schools.