IN-SERVICE EDUCATION IN TURKEY

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INTRODUCTION

The heavy reliance on people to perform nearly all tasks required for developing and maintaining quality educational programs is a reality that must be admitted (**Harris, 1989**). Although money, materials, time, space, facilities, and curricula are important for the operation and success of schools, people make the crucial difference in the school operation. As long as people make the crucial difference in the school operation, their pre-service and in-service education will be a vital concern (**Oldroyd & Hall, 1991**).

Especially, in-service education of the personnel is very important for the success of schools because: Even if a fully qualified, competent staff are available, time gradually erodes that competence as conditions change and old competencies become obsolete. Even more, the real problems confronting schools are enormous in comparison with any ideal conditions. The gap between what people can do and what they are potentially capable of doing is also enormous for most staff members. Even the gap between what people are doing and what they want to do is very great for many staff members.

Schools are attempting to cope with a number of significant educational changes: new curricula, new grading system, etc. These changes require new expertise, and that expertise must come from currently employed teachers.

In Türkiye, many teachers are in somewhat unusual teaching situations. There is a high degree of mismatch between academic professional training (pre-service) and teaching assignment. One teacher, for example, who has undergraduate qualifications to teach high school science may be teaching elementary class; another teacher with a social studies major may be teaching secondary mathematics, without any further preparation.

Over the past decade or so there have been tremendous advances in knowledge about how children learn and the contexts conducive to child learning. In-service education is the obvious vehicle for providing such "updatings" to mature, tenured people (**Harris, 1989; Ryan, 1987**).

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The improvement of instruction is the essential focus of in-service education. Improving instruction means changing the ongoing operation in some way. Changes can be planned or unplanned. Within the context of planned change, at least five rather different approaches to improvement are possible. Thinking more specifically about the improvement of instruction process, these approaches include (**Harris, 1989**):

1. improving instructional goals and objectives

2. improving instructional resources provided

3. improving the tools for instruction

4. improving the working conditions within which teaching and learning take place

5. improving staff performance.

The fifth approach relates directly to in-service education. In-service is the major vehicle for helping teachers to implement changes. Some of these changes follow from new legislation and national priorities, e.g. a new national curriculum, a formal system of teacher appraisal; others are based on locally identified needs arising from school self-evaluation., e.g. active-learning methods, the use of information technology. Whenever teachers are asked to behave in a different way they must change

* what they know - awareness, knowing about..

* what they believe - attitudes, feelings about...

* what they can do - skills, knowing how...

* what they actually do - performance, putting their knowledge, attitudes and skills to work in the classroom (**Harris, 1989; Ryan, 1987; Oldroyd & Hall, 1991**).

These are the realities that make in-service education the most important developmental task to which the schools of the nation must attend in the decades ahead.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss some of the problems related to in-service education in Turkiye and suggest methods to improve inservice education.

The Problems With The In-Service Education In Turkey

A great deal of energy is expended in the preparation and delivery of in-service activity in Turkiye. The scope of this activity may be indicated by the huge sums of money spent on it. Estimates range up to one trillion liras annually on in-service education activities for educational personnel.

However, much of the literature makes reference to the general dissatisfaction of participants with in-service education activities. From a survey of the literature one is able to glean a number of defects in in-service identified by a variety of researchers and observers. Some of them are as follows (**Taymaz, 1981; Küçükahmet, 1985, Tezer, 1994**):

1. Poor planning and organization.

2. Courses focus on information dissemination rather than stressing the use of the information or appropriate practice in the classroom.

3. Principles of adult learning are not used.

4. Activities are not related to the day to day problems of participants.

5. Inadequate needs assessment.

6. Unclear course objectives.

7. The lack of follow-up in the job setting after training takes place.

8. In-service education activities are not individualized and not related to learner interests and needs.

9. Staff responsibilities are not clear.

10. A statewide focus, distant from the real (assessed) local needs of teachers and administrators in their schools.

11. A decided lack of modeling.

12. Little follow through and follow-up evaluation.

13. In-service trainers are not carefully selected.

In-service education in Türkiye is not as successful as it should be because of these reasons. Although there may be many other relevant factors, the most important factor is that a program of systematic and planned activities needed for the success of in-service education has been given very little attention.

The success of in-service education as stated above depends, in most part, on the program of systematic and planned activities. In the following section, this process will be briefly explained.

There are numerous models of and plans for in service education in the literature. Some of these are rather simple; others are highly abstract and theoretical. In this paper, we offer the generic systems approach model in a simple way to be practical for in service education designers. This model of systems approach to in service education suggests five stages:

A. Analysis

1. Analyze needs, goals, and priorities

2. Analyze resources, constraints, and alternate delivery systems

3. Determine scope and sequence of training program (by task and job analysis)

B. Design

1. Determine training approach

2. Develop learning objectives

3. Develop performance measures

4. Develop training program specifications

C. Development

1. Develop curriculum guide

2. Develop lesson plans

3. Develop supportive media

4. Politest/revise materials

D. Implementation

1. Implement training plan

2. Conduct training

3. Conduct formative evaluation

4. Document training results

E. Evaluation

1. Conduct summative evaluation

2. Analyze information collected

3. Initiate corrective actions

A. ANALYSIS

The first stage in the generic systems approach model is analysis. The analysis phase is completed by using a needs assessment process. Training is not developed in a vacuum; training programs are developed to meet needs, and needs should be arrived at systematically by identifying discrepancies between current conditions or outcomes and desired conditions or outcomes.

Thus, when in service training programs are being designed, analysis involves first to gather information about discrepancies and to use that information to make decisions about priorities (determining which of the identified needs should have priority). The priorities that must be determined are the goals for the in service training effort.

Training needs in industry are often derived from a job analysis, or from a comparison of the present performance of personnel with the performance desired of them. There are many ways to collect information about needs. The in service training designer must know which method is appropriate and what questions to ask.

When needs and goals have been identified, in service education planners (designers) need to identify parameters of the needs: resources, constraints, and alternate delivery systems.

Finally, there is a need to restate original needs and goals as performance objectives which are sufficiently specific and detailed to show progress on goals.

B. DESIGN

The second phase of the systems approach is design. In this phase, the overall curriculum is outlined and the foundation for the construction of the training program is developed. The components that make up the foundation all derive from the information and data gathered during the analysis phase.

One step in building the foundation is the identification of the training setting. Some skills are best taught in the classroom; some, in the lab; some, through simulation, etc. The nature of the task to be learned will suggest the setting in which it should be taught and evaluated. Plans are made for various sized group activities, and needed teacher guides are noted.

A second foundation step is the development of learning objectives. Learning objectives should derive directly from the results of the task analysis and should be stated in terms of observable behaviors. In this way, you ensure that the training will meet actual training needs and that the results of training are measurable.

Another foundation step is the development of test items to measure the achievement of the learning objectives. Using the clues provided by the action word in the objective (e.g., construct, recall, list, classify), the appropriate test items can be devised.

For example, in order to measure a trainee's ability to recall information, a completion item would be appropriate. A performance test item, on the other hand, would be appropriate to measure a trainee's ability to construct something.

Once developed, test items are used to form pretests, progress tests, and posttests. Pretests allow you to confirm that trainees are ready to enter the program or to identify that they need remediation or that their skills are such that they can be accelerated through or exempt from the program. Posttests provide you with a basis for assessing whether a trainee has completed the program successfully.

The results of this phase-sequenced objectives and a test item bank- also provide the basis for the development of another foundation product: a preliminary curriculum (or course) outline (or plan). It is this outline that provides the instructional skeleton that you then flesh out during the development phase.

C. DEVELOPMENT

The analysis and design phases tell what will be taught: what tasks trainees need to learn to perform and what learning elements (e.g. steps, knowledge, skills, safety) are involved in those tasks. The next phase-development- deals with how those tasks and supporting content will be taught: what learning activities, training materials, and instructional methods will lead trainees to mastery of the required skills and knowledge. The documents that outline the results of these development decisions are the unit plan and the lesson plan.

Because this is a systems approach, each phase builds upon the work of the previous phase(s). Thus, the curriculum outline grows out of the analysis and design phases and then guides the development of unit plans, and the unit plans guide the development of lesson plans. The curriculum outline provides the bare bones of the instructional program, unit plans add substance to those bones, and lesson plans provide the specific detail.

Likewise, the objectives, which were developed on the basis of task analysis reflect the preferred training setting (e.g., knowledge, simulation, actual performance). This information, in turn, suggests what activities would be appropriate, what materials are needed, and what methods should be employed.

If the objective states that the trainee needs to perform a manipulative skill, for example, then the methods, materials, and activities should facilitate and support skill development. You might demonstrate the skill in class (or show a videotaped or filmed demonstration) and provide trainees with a handout that lists the steps and safety requirements involved in performing the skill. And once the trainees have seen the skill performed and read about the steps involved, they could be required to participate in an activity involving practice of the skill, perhaps in a guided laboratory experience.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

Logically, the next phase in the process is putting the plans to use. This assumes the presence of trained instructors, access to the needed facilities and equipment, and the availability of trainees who possess the prerequisite (entry-level) knowledge and skills to succeed in the planned program. Each instructor, then is responsible for preparing for and constructing instruction on the basis of the established (and approved) plans. A normal part of instruction is record keeping-documenting what occurs in the training process. Another essential task is evaluation of trainee progress and achievement.

E. EVALUATION

The systems approach appears to be linear, moving in a straight line from analysis to evaluation. In one sense, this is true. Program evaluation is a culminating experience.

However, evaluation is also an inherent part of all phases of the process; it is continual. Second, the results of evaluation feed back into the beginning of the process-

analysis - to provide a basis for planning future program modifications or additions; in other words, the systems approach is a circular process. Furthermore, the results of evaluation feed back into each phase of the process; the process is interactive. A graphic representation of this process and its multifaceted nature is shown in sample 1.

The continual evaluation you carry out is often called process (or formative) evaluation. Thus, as part of the each of system phases, you would need to build in an evaluation component. In other words, in the analysis phase, it is not sufficient simply to identify tasks and analyze them. You must ensure through evaluation that you have identified the right tasks and analyzed them accurately and completely. For the analysis phase, verification can serve this evaluation function, at least in part.

Likewise, as part of the design phase, you need to evaluate whether the objectives in fact derive from the given tasks and whether the initial curricular decisions made at this point are in fact designed to lead to the achievement of those objectives. As part of the development phase, you need to evaluate the instructional plans and materials produced; you might submit your plans and materials to skilled instructors or subject-matter experts (SMEs) for technical review or pilot test them with a small group of trainees, for example. Any tests should be evaluated to ensure their reliability, validity, and usability.

The implementation phase is often a short-term and long-term proposition; the program is taught for the first time (short-term) and then continues to be taught again

and again over time (long-term). It is important to provide for evaluation of program effectiveness in terms of trainee achievement each time the program is taught.

The evaluation you carry out in the last phase is often called product (or summative) evaluation. The evaluation plan you develop as part of this phase should provide for organizing the relevant evaluation data gathered during the previous phases. In addition, the plan should provide for gathering additional program evaluation data as needed. For example, it may specify procedures and devices for evaluating instructor effectiveness or the adequacy of facilities. It may provide for follow-up evaluation, in other words, evaluating trainee performance-or asking trainees to evaluate the program-after they have been back on the job for some time (e.g., six months).

The purposes of evaluation are generally twofold: to provide the effectiveness and cost-benefit of training and to provide invaluable information for instructional improvement. By carefully evaluating the process and product of instruction, you can pinpoint areas of concern and ensure that the next time the training program is offered, it has been modified to capitalize on its strengths and eliminate its weaknesses.

In summary then, a systems approach involves specific phases (e.g., analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation). These phases build one upon the other. In addition, completing all phases produces information that is useful in future planning. Thus, the system ensures that decisions are arrived at through data-gathering

and sound logic rather than guesswork, and the system strengthens itself by using the data gathered to improve subsequent training.

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