

TRAINING OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED IN NURSERY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Nursery schools are considered imperative as they establish a foundation from where the learning of the individual takes place. This education serves as a starting point of formal education. It articulates with the primary, secondary and tertiary education to form an entire spectrum of education. In order to make nursery school education worthwhile and beneficial to the students, it is important to focus upon the training of the teachers employed. The teachers need to possess complete knowledge and awareness regarding the needs and requirements of the students and information regarding the instructional strategies. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper are, who are the nursery school teachers, significance of teacher's training in nursery school education, areas in training of nursery teachers, role of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in professional development of nursery school teachers, and recommendations for improvement of nursery teachers training.

Keywords: Training, Teachers, Nursery Schools, Education, Development, Students

INTRODUCTION

Nursery schooling makes provision of a stimulating environment for the students leading to their physical, social, intellectual, language, emotional and cognitive development. It prepares the students for the primary and focuses upon their holistic development. At this stage, students begin to learn play activities, alphabets, numbers, reading, writing and artworks. The students are provided knowledge of how to interact with the environmental conditions, actively participate in group activities and provide solutions to the problems (Pre-Primary Teacher Training, n.d.). These areas are important for the growth and development of students, and it is vital for the teachers employed in nursery schools to possess adequate knowledge, skills and abilities for leading to effective learning and enhancement of knowledge amongst the students. At this level of education, students are taught how to inculcate the traits of self-control and discipline amongst themselves. They are able to develop effective communication skills with their teachers, friends, neighbours and family members.

The teachers employed in nursery schools need to be efficiently trained in order to perform their job duties well. They do not just have to possess the knowledge of curriculum and lesson plans imparted to the students in various subject areas, but they also have to be adequately trained regarding management of the students, and inculcating the traits of regulation and obedience amongst them. Within nursery schools, it is the job of the teachers to maintain a pleasant and an amiable environment that stimulates learning and understanding amongst the students. The teachers employed in nursery schools need to be trained in four important areas,

these are, organization and management of nursery schools, impartment of knowledge and skills in the planning and implementation of pre-primary educational programs, provide training to the students in the organization of parent education programs (Pre-Primary Teacher Training, n.d.) and to train the individuals in promoting advanced and innovative strategies and methods necessary to enhance student learning.

WHO ARE THE NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHERS?

Who are the nursery school teachers? This question is more specifically concerned with, how are they distributed by age and gender? The identification of nursery school teacher's age and gender distributions are done in order to acquire a better understanding of who are the individuals involved in working as pre-primary teachers. Evaluations of nursery school teachers are made to further contextualize the data. While it is difficult to regulate a proper balance between younger and older teachers, males and females, data demonstrating thoughtful inequalities will assist in informing the current and future policy. However, unlike primary education, monitoring pre-primary teacher age and gender data may be less beneficial for assisting to efficiently respond to the changing forms of enrolment and the availability of financial resources, since many developing countries do not have large well developed state sponsored pre-primary systems to begin with. Related to this, data that reveals small sub-portions of the entire system of pre-primary education can eventually lead to imprudence and tunnel vision when trying to understand the concept (Wallet, 2006).

The Age profile of the Teachers –In nursery schools, teachers belong to all age groups, from the age of 20 until the age of 70 years. Their age determines their experience, the more their age is, the more they are experienced and vice-versa. When hiring of teachers takes place, usually women belonging to the age group of 20 to 30 years are preferred. The women, who are above 30 years of age are experienced and are more likely to change their jobs. The age data of the teachers provides the policy-makers with the perception, so that they are able to plan for the future in an efficient manner. This is primarily important with older teaching forces, in general, countries with large numbers of teachers in their fifties and older teachers, need to prepare sensibly, so that training and recruitment devices are in place to ensure future requirements are met. Data on teacher ages is also significant as it provides an alternative for measuring the levels of complete practice and experience (Wallet, 2006).

Nursery schools with young teachers i.e. below 30 years of age, can in some cases be confronted with concerns of instructional and educational quality, given the lack of older and more experienced staff, who can provide mentorship and assistances and transfer of knowledge. This is not essentially so given that older staff may also lack the basic training that new recruits may be prepared with. Additionally, it is reasonable in certain cases that implementation of new curriculum and instructional methods may prove to be easier with younger and more adjustable staff. This being stated, it is commonly agreed that older teachers bring considerable assistances to

schools and have much to give to both students and other teachers, based on their received astuteness and wisdom (Wallet, 2006).

The Gender Profile of the Teachers –In nursery schools, usually women teachers are preferred, as women will be able to take care of the needs and requirements of the nursery school students in an appropriate manner. In some cases, women do not be in their jobs for a long term period and tend to leave attributable to other reasons. In general, the education sector is an important source for employment among women in developed countries given the opportunities for combining family and career. The contrary tends to be true in the developing world, i.e., more men than women are hired and the abilities and skills of the women, therefore, often remain an unutilized resource. That being stated, the gender composition of teacher workforces will inevitably, to some degree, reflect national norms, traditions or economics. Regarding the latter, research has demonstrated that there is a correlation between per capita Gross National Product (GNP) and the proportion of female teachers in primary education (Wallet, 2006).

Fundamentally, the higher the per capita GNP, the larger percentage of primary teachers are females. Related to economics, it has also thought that gender balances and imbalances provide an indication of the labour market situation of the teachers in general. For instance, regions with high unemployment levels will inescapably determine higher proportions of male teachers, as there are fewer employment opportunities available to the general population. Access to education is another reason to scrutinize gender data of the nursery teachers. There is evidence of a positive correlation between the gender of the teachers and gender parity amongst students in nursery schools. In nursery schools, the job duties will be more adequately performed by the female teachers as compared to the male teachers, hence, females are preferred. The nursery schools that have both males and females normally have equal proportions of male and female students. In contrast, where proportions of female teachers are around 20%, only seven to eight girls are entering primary education for every ten boys. While it is hard to create cause and effect in this case, it is certainly plausible that establishing gender parity in the classroom will eventually result in more female teachers (Wallet, 2006).

SIGNIFICANCE OF TEACHER'S TRAINING IN NURSERY SCHOOL EDUCATION

The teachers employed in nursery schools need to understand the value of nursery school education and be completely aware of their job duties. The training of teachers are primarily focused upon understanding the value of nursery school education. The main areas that teachers need to be aware of have been stated as follows: (Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum, 2006).

Understanding and respecting students is an important principle of early childhood education. The primary areas that influence the learning of students are, family, school and society. Under the major principle of understanding and respecting students, proper co-ordination amongst the three parties will enable the children to develop their potential and lead them to live a healthy life. The teachers need to provide effective solutions to all kinds of difficulties and

problems faced by young students. By developing appropriate learning habits and interest in learning, students will be well prepared for lifelong learning.

Students are born to be learners and their development possesses specific patterns and characteristics. The development of the students possesses precise forms and features, mainly relating to their attitude and behavioural traits. The teachers need to understand the value of the materials that is to be imparted to the students. The curriculum and the instructional methods that are formulated also have to be from the perspective of family background of the students. The learning and development of the students are influenced by the individuals and the areas to a major extent and the teachers need to be aware of these aspects.

Parents are the first teachers of their children as well as the crucial partners that contribute in the nurturing of children. Families are referred to as the foundations, in which the development of behaviour, self-esteem, values and attitudes of the children is influenced by the parents and other family members to a major extent. The knowledge of the parents of early childhood education, expectations and parenting style may influence the functioning of the individuals in ways to be reflected later in life. These include, their self-care ability, social attitude and learning process in schools, as well as their compatibility with the community. Therefore, the family is an important pillar of children's development and family participation is vital for the success of early childhood education.

An educational institution contributes a significant part in preparing the individuals to face all the challenges and barriers in life. It is a bridge between family life and social life. Pre-primary institutions need to understand family backgrounds of the students, and create partnership with parents and other family members, understand the social environment and needs, and utilise community resources in an appropriate manner, hold the current trends of early childhood education to define their mission and plan the curriculum. Pre-primary institutions should also provide children with care and appropriate learning opportunities which cater for the developmental needs of the students, in accordance to their potential, to inspire their interest in learning and foster a balanced development in ethical, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic aspects. By these means, children will be well-prepared for life and become proactive, self-motivated and responsible citizens as well as life-long learners.

Social needs have an influence upon nursery school education policies, whereas social culture affects requirements of the parents for nursery school education. Pre-primary institutions must detect the social environment to help students develop their potential and prepare for future learning. Prior to the establishment of pre-primary institutions, the sponsoring body should understand the needs of the society in mapping out strategies that conform to government policy while adhering to the child-centred principles. The students are the future citizens of the country, hence, it is vital to focus upon their growth and development from the initial stage. The challenge ahead for early childhood education is how to proactively meet the demand for talent in the

future. In an accommodating and pleasant environment, society, family and school can work together to create an optimistic future for the students.

Every pre-primary institution has its own objectives. In order to achieve those objectives, they need to implement various operations and adopt strategies. The primary goal is to lead to growth and development of students. The curriculum framework with the nursery schools, provides general directions for curriculum development for pre-primary practitioners. The main purposes are, to broaden the space for learning, to be child-centred, to respect individual differences, to encourage motivation for learning and to care for student's needs and requirements. Pre-primary institutions need to frame their own curriculum base and transform it into appropriate learning experiences for the students.

Every student is different from the other with respect to skills, abilities, natures and behavioural traits. They also differ from the other with respect to their needs and requirements. The growth and development of the students takes place at varying degrees, and it is vital for the teachers to generate awareness regarding their needs and implement effective teaching-learning processes. Teachers should understand and respect the unique developmental pattern of every student, to foster the initiative of the students in further developing and improving their awareness, information and abilities.

Students in nursery schools are dynamic learners, who are interested and curious in exploration. When teachers make use of technology to enhance their learning, when they are provided proper instructions and computer knowledge, they become curious to learn. Given proper resources, information and assistance from the adults, children can create knowledge on their own. A non-violent, amiable, pleasant, comfortable, enjoyable and challenging environment is encouraging to the learning of the students.

Teachers need to be familiar with the learning and development of children. Their main purpose is to understand the behaviour of the students, have appropriate expectations and requirements towards students, which in turn provides assistance in the formulation of rules and policies within the schools. The organization of learning activities are crucial areas, these have to be done, taking into account the difficulty levels of the students and in meeting their interests, needs and abilities. Students have differing learning abilities, therefore, teachers need to make use of the teaching-learning processes and instructional methods in accordance to their skills and ability levels.

Nursery schools should develop the learning abilities and potential for the students through informal learning, which is integrated, open, flexible and appropriate to catering for their developmental needs and interests. Major emphasis is put upon play and creative activities in nursery schools. The main reason for this is, students at this level, do not possess strong learning and understanding abilities, especially when they are two or three years of age, hence, their

learning begins with play. When the students are four to five years of age, then they are able to understand numbers, alphabets, reading and writing methods.

AREAS IN TRAINING OF NURSERY TEACHERS

The important areas that need to be focused upon in the training of nursery teachers have been stated as follows: (Ranjan, & Rahman, n.d.).

Administration – Most of the teachers in nursery schools are restricted to their teaching. The administration of the nursery schools is also a vital area that needs to be focused upon. Administration refers to the organization, direction, control, co-ordination and regulation of human and material resources that are required for the effective growth and development of the students and to incur job satisfaction amongst teachers. These functions are important to make use of and teachers and staff members of the institutions are the ones who would possess adequate knowledge. The administrative function enables the teachers to find out the kind of resources that are needed for educational growth and development.

Personnel Management – Planning and management of human resources is referred to as personnel management. The main areas that come under personnel management are, recruitment, transfer, redeployment, pay and benefits, promotional opportunities and performance appraisal systems, grievance redressal mechanisms and issues related to professional development. Personnel management also includes provision of means that would lead to job satisfaction amongst the individuals. The individuals would be able to render an adequate performance, when they feel satisfied with their jobs. On the other hand, the feelings of job dissatisfaction amongst the individuals would prove to be an impediment within the course of their job performance.

Planning - Planning is a managerial function that is concerned with what kinds of improvements, innovative methods and approaches, individuals tend to bring about in their work. In other words, it is primarily concerned with bringing about changes and transformations. It is a methodical and an organized exercise of determining the future course of action in accordance with the main objectives, needs, priorities and existing capabilities, within a given time frame, reflecting the cost-effective choices. In nursery schools, teachers are required to get involved in the planning process. They are free to communicate any ideas and suggestions to the principals or the head mistresses that are required to bring about improvements within the teaching-learning processes, curriculum and instructional methods, other activities, competitions, events, functions and so forth.

Financial Management - The nursery schools differ from each other with respect to their physical appearance, location, building, environmental conditions, number of classrooms, teachers, students, infrastructure, teaching-learning materials and technology. There are some schools which are reputed and have large buildings and teaching and learning takes place in an appropriate manner and there are provision of all facilities there. On the other hand, there are

some nursery schools that are located in the houses of individuals, they have limited resources and in some cases do not make provision of all the required facilities, tools, equipment and instructional materials. Financial management is an imperative area that enables the individuals to identify, what kinds of provisions they will be able to make to the students. Financial management refers to utilisation, organization and efficient use of financial resources as per the stated objectives, goals, strategies and approaches.

Supervision, Monitoring and Support – Monitoring and facilitation of the teaching and the learning processes and other school development activities are important areas that need to be supervised, monitored and supported. The teaching and the learning processes are imperative areas in educational institutions and it is vital to implement measures that lead to their improvement. Their improvement is primarily brought about through the utilization of suitable tools, equipment and methods. The nursery teachers should possess adequate knowledge that is necessary to implement the functions of supervision, monitoring and support in all areas. Efforts need to be made to lead to improvements in the quality of processes and procedures.

Information Management–In nursery schools, teachers collaborate and also make observation visits to other schools in order to gain knowledge regarding various areas, such as their teaching-learning processes, infrastructure, personal environmental conditions, and so forth. When observation visits make them feel enthusiastic and interested, then they do include those qualities within their own schools. Management of information is known as an institutional resource. It includes, collection, processing, dissemination and utilization of information. The information can be collected from a number of sources, these include, field visits, internet, reading of books, articles, papers and so forth. Therefore, individuals need to make effective use of it and ensure distribution and processing takes place in an adequate manner.

Communication – Communication is considered to be an imperative aspect that is needed for the effectual functioning of not just nursery schools, but all kinds of organizations. It involves giving and receiving of information with proper feedback. It takes place either in a verbal form or in a written form. It either takes place face to face or through the use of technology, by sending emails or messages. It is important for the teachers to communicate in an efficient manner with their employers, staff members, parents and students. Nursery school students are young and sometimes it is hard to deal with them. It is important for the teachers to be patient and develop a caring nature.

Growth and Development of Students – The growth and development of students is one of the areas that is of utmost significance. In nursery schools, the curriculum and the instructional systems, the content and the subject areas that are important to facilitate growth and development of the students need to be focused upon. The teachers should possess efficient knowledge and understanding of all the areas that need to be imparted to the students. The teachers in most cases, believe that their primary job duty centres upon training and development of students. Apart from

the possession of knowledge and information, it is important that they should be aware of the teaching methods and strategies that are necessary.

ROLE OF DISTRICT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING (DIET) IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHERS

District Institute of Education and Training is an organization for making provision of academic and resource support at the district and grassroots levels for the accomplishment of various strategies and programs undertaken in the area of elementary education. Until the adaptation of National Policy of Education (NPE) 1986, academic and resource support in the area of elementary education was being provided at the national and state levels only by the institutions, such as NCERT, NUEPA and SCERTs. DIETs were established with the financial support from the central governments in pursuance of NPE 1986 (Yadav, n.d.). The role that DIET plays in the professional development of nursery school teachers have been stated in the following points (Yadav, n.d.).

In nursery schools, the teachers have to play the roles of leaders. They need to establish leadership skills within them in order to lead to effective learning of the students and also progression of the school. The possession of leadership skills enables the individuals to make wise decisions, provide solutions to any kinds of problems or conflicting situations that take place and adequately direct, manage, organize and control the students as well as operations and functions. The principal or the head mistress is the one that is primarily vested with the leadership skills, she is supposed to put into practice the functions of planning, organizing, directing, leading, co-ordinating and controlling in an appropriate manner to lead to effective development of the teachers, staff members, and students.

Learning materials, infrastructure, techniques and methods are imperative areas to be taken into consideration to improve student learning. It is important for the teachers to generate awareness regarding creating an environment, where students are able to take pleasure and become motivated towards learning. Provision of quality learning materials are the essential sources that stimulate the mind-sets of the students towards learning. Learning in nursery schools begins with play, therefore, it is essential for the teachers to make provision of playthings and other materials that may enhance student learning. In other words, in this point, more focus is put upon creation of an amiable and a sociable environment.

Promotion of innovative methods and techniques are essential to improve the functioning of the nursery schools. In nursery schools, training and progression of the students is a primary area that needs to be given utmost significance. The performance of the teachers and the students contribute in the development of reputation of the nursery schools. Besides this, it is important to look into other areas too, such as, organization of competitions, workshops, events and other

functions in schools. More emphasis should be put upon the development of creative and extra-curricular activities. Environment is made more encouraging by displaying of artworks and other creative works to be viewed by the parents and other visitors. These works contribute in the enhancement of reputation of the schools within the community.

The teachers working in nursery schools need to possess a pleasant and a caring nature. They should be considerate towards young students and even deal with any kind of play or mischief in a calm manner. The teachers possess different natures and attitudes, if they are caring and good-natured, they are able to render an adequate performance in their jobs and incur job satisfaction. On the other hand, if the teachers are impatient or get easily aggravated, then they do not exist in their jobs for a long term or tend to leave early. Nursery school teaching is challenging, the main reason being, young students are difficult to handle, hence, it is vital for the teachers to possess a tranquil and a composed nature. Therefore, training programs for the teachers should put emphasis upon generating positivity in their attitudes and behavioural traits.

Nursery schools are regarded as important institutions that build up the foundation from where the learning of the child takes place. In the present existence, in education at all levels, emphasis is put upon usage of technology. The usage of technology has predominantly contributed in the learning and up-gradation of individuals. In nursery schools, students are young, and they are of three to five years of age, hence, at this age, they themselves cannot make use of computers or any other kinds of technologies. The teachers make use of computers to show them pictures of objects and places, they are shown how to draw objects, shapes, and colour them and sometimes they are also shown movies or cartoons on the computer. Technology arouses interest and enthusiasm within the mind-sets of the students towards learning.

In the present existence, the children belonging to deprived, marginalized and socio-economically backward sections of the society, who do not have the opportunity to get enrolled in reputed nursery schools, mainly because of financial problems are provided training by volunteers or non-government organizations. It is an important role of DIET to provide training to the individuals so that they are able to contribute towards their professional development. It is vital for the teachers to be professional in their conduct, particularly, when they are working towards skill enhancement of students belonging to deprived communities. Professionalism on the part of the teachers is an essential aspect that contributes to a major extent in incurring job satisfaction.

Making provision of support to the district authorities in the implementation of quality nursery school education is an imperative area. In nursery school education, there are number of areas that need to be focused upon. In majority of cases, students feel vulnerable in the school environment and tend to ask repeatedly for their mothers, therefore, it is vital for the teachers to develop a mother like attitude. In nursery schools, there is a mother system, which means all through the school timings, the students be under one teacher. All the subjects, such as English,

Hindi, mathematics, science, arts, and creative activities are taught to the students by a single teacher.

One of the important areas is, teachers are required to increase their knowledge base in this area. It is easy for a person to teach five year olds, alphabets and numbers or how to draw and paint. Besides these manageable concepts, the difficult concepts are dealing with naughty and playful students, controlling them and managing their conduct. When the teacher is teaching and students are not paying attention and making noise, then it is aggravating, but teachers have to learn how to deal with difficult situations in a calm and composed manner. It is essential to develop competence in conduct of quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programs in different settings. Nursery Teachers Training (NTT) and Bachelors of Elementary Education are the programs that contribute in the development of knowledge, skills and abilities of the individuals, who are interested in taking up nursery school education as a career. The individuals, involved in training of nursery teachers should possess adequate knowledge, so that they are able to perform their job duties efficiently.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF NURSERY TEACHERS TRAINING

The recommendations focus upon the significance of training provided to the teachers in nursery schools and how they would be trained in recognized institutions: (Preparing Teachers for Early Childhood Care and Education, n.d.).

Duration of the Course - The study approves the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) requirement of Class 12 eligibility and two years duration. It also approves the inclusion of Grades I and II in its scope, since students upto eight years of age are considered to be in a similar developmental stage with similar characteristics and ways of learning and responding, as the three to six year olds. This is also a transition stage for formal schooling, wherein students are at maximum risk of dropping out, as per national data available, and the need for smoothening the change for the students is important. For this purpose, the pedagogical approach and curriculum at the early primary stage needs to have continuity with the nursery school level. The individuals, who have graduated from these courses have become eligible for employment in nursery schools, as programs make provision of knowledge to them that is required in every sphere of nursery teaching. Programs also ensure the overall consistency and employability of teachers and they will be able to perform their job duties in an adequate manner.

Ensuring Equitable Access with Quality - To address the issue of inequitable access to teacher education, the study recommends that the government should, as part of its Teacher Education Policy, promote expansion of high quality teacher education institutions for ECCE through its own initiatives and or through encouragement of the private and NGO sectors, with a view to ensure more equitable distribution of ECCE teacher education programmes in all states of the country, especially in states where none exist in the present. This can be done through

establishing ECCE programs in the DIETS, which will ensure both equitable distribution and continuity with primary teacher education. NCTE introducing the process of preparation of a curriculum framework and development of norms and provisions for a pre-service course for Teacher Educators in ECCE. Encouragement of higher education institutions, such as universities to establish a moreflexible, and effectual teacher education programmes in ECCE at the post-graduate level, which could prepare competent teacher educators and professionals in ECCE. Provide periodic refresher training for committed teacher educators and ECCE personnel, employed in management positions, and institutionalise larger competence in teacher education.

Strengthening Regulation of Standards – Revising of the norms and standards is considered an imperative aspect of teacher education. Within the course of time, it is important to review the monitoring and the regulatory mechanisms and they should be strengthened with the professional capacity to ensure that all the institutions on the ground are meeting the definite standards of professional quality. Norms, frameworks and policies are the imperative areas that need to be revised from time to time. Standards are stated as the areas that lead to reformations in all the areas of nursery school teaching. It is vital to reflect upon the institution of the system of accreditation of teacher education institutions to reinforce the quality dimension, provide institutions an incentive to improve their professional standards and recognize some well performing institutions in different geographies, as a chain of resource institutions, which could play a mentoring role for other institutions within the area.

Improving Practice Teaching –The teachers, who are more experienced in nursery schools and have been there for a long term duration are more skilled as compared to the teachers, who have been in nursery schools for a short period of time. The more the time the teachers be in their jobs, the more efficient, resourceful and skilled they become. In nursery schools, there are teachers, who work without pay to gain training experience. Training experience enables them to apply for jobs in reputed institutions, so that they do not face any problems in finding a job, as in most cases, jobs require experience. Nursery schools, therefore make this opportunity available that teachers can work without pay on honorary basis and make improvements in their teaching methods. Thus, it can be stated that practice of the teachers leads to improvement in their skills and abilities.

Involving Teacher Educators - An important concern coming through in the study is the limited discussion with enthusiastic teacher educators in the process of curriculum development and there is not any planned induction training or orientation for them in operation of the curriculum. The study recommends that any implementation in curriculum development for teacher education should involve teacher educators dynamically in the process of its development, and requirements be made for primary and review trainings and improvement of appropriate reference materials and readings for teacher educators, particularly, since in most cases the curriculum is devised by curriculum framers or consultants and required to be taught by teacher

educators, who may not have the knowledge or training to implement it as conceptualized. NCTE should adopt a more proactive role in not only regulating but also promoting quality in teacher education by establishing precise and periodic orientation programmes for teacher educators in action research, among other areas, so that they can in turn be enabled to improve the qualifications of the teachers in an efficient manner.

Upgrading the Curriculum - Curriculum for teacher education in ECCE should be revised from the perception of ensuring that it follows a child development perspective and covers the entire developmental continuum from birth to eight years, to provide a complete understanding of child development to the student teachers, it puts emphasis on enabling and preparing the graduating teachers to work in various institutions and in different social milieu and includes updated insights from international research information and contemporary policy scenarios in India, predominantly those that have precise inferences for the classroom settings. The curriculum should include more opportunity for individual development of the student teacher through organization of tutorials, workshops, individual and team assignments and presentations, and a constituent of self-development opportunities.

Open and Distance Education – Maximising Potential – This puts emphasis upon the effective usage of technology, such as addressing issues of practice teaching by including a requirement of video recording of a defined number of practice teaching and internship experiences to be shared with counsellors at study centres for feedback and accountability. Open and distance education led to better adherence to quality standards through permitting direct interface of student teachers with high quality teacher educators through videoconferencing. Discovering the possibility of constituting national and state level resource groups, who could be involved in all quality related aspects of the program, including curriculum development, setting of examination papers, monitoring of study centres and internship practices in a more synergistic mode. In the present existence, these functions seem to be either absent or disjointed.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of nursery school education is to make provision of a varied and an expanded learning environment for the students to help them develop their potentials, skills and abilities. It is the primary job of the teachers, who are employed in nursery schools to create an environment, where students get the opportunity to enhance their proficiency. The training of the teachers in nursery schools is focused upon number of areas, they need to understand the needs and requirements of the students appropriately. They should possess adequate knowledge of the curriculum and instructional methods, technology and teaching-learning processes. In nursery schools, students normally feel vulnerable and apprehensive, therefore, it is the job of the teachers to create an amiable, pleasant and a sociable environment, interact with the students in a friendly and polite manner and possess a caring nature.

Numerous studies have shown that students in nursery schools are able to construct their knowledge and recognize the significance of education through the assistance obtained from the adults. From the perspective of constructivist learning theory, nursery school students are lively, active and self-motivated in their learning process. The teachers have to take up the roles of implementer, motivator and supporter to facilitate the progression, growth and development of students.

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